

Our Outback Home

Memories of Nymagee



Edited by Dolly Betts



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All of the stories in this book have been published as they have been submitted.
Please understand that these stories are how people remember
and some memories may differ from person to person.

The word "Nymagee" is an Aboriginal word meaning "small plain surrounded by hills". The village of Nymagee is in the Cobar Shire, in far western New South Wales.

Copper was discovered in the area by Mr Henry Manly, between 1879 and 1896. The Nymagee mine opened and commenced operation in 1880.

In its heyday Nymagee had several hotels and many more buildings than you see today. In 1902 the population was about 1,800. Sadly, in 2002 the population has dwindled to about 30.

The Nymagee Post Office was built about 1887, the building still stands today, almost in its original state, and is a private home.

In 1902 a brick Court House and lock up was built. Over the years the building hasn't changed very much at all.

Today, Nymagee consists of a well equipped Public School, the local Metropolitan Hotel, a large community hall, CWA rest rooms, tennis courts, cricket ground, gymkhana ground, children's playground, the old butcher's shop still stands, two churches and several private homes. It even boasts bitumen streets and town water supply – something that many of the 'old timers' would never have dreamed of.

The old mine tank site is now used for the Nymagee Outback Music Festival.

NYMAGEE 1950

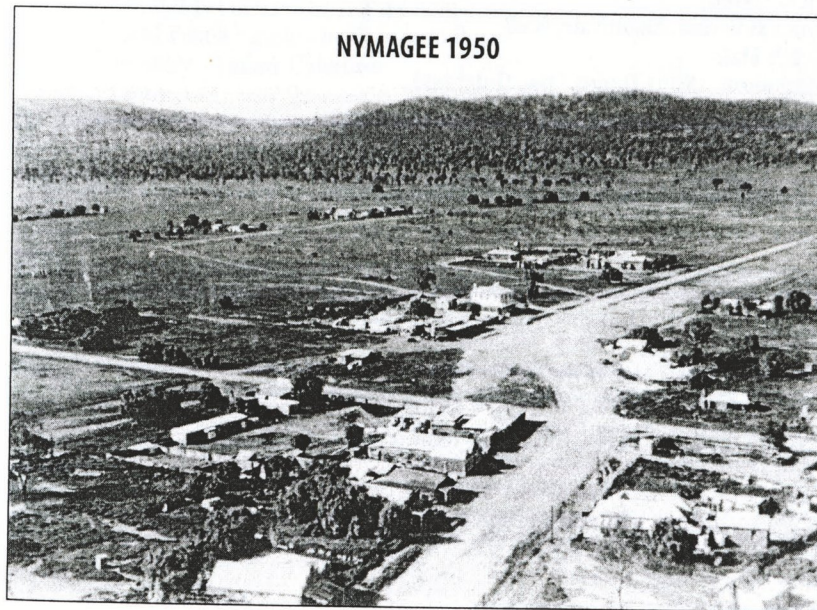


Table of Contents

A Brief History of Nymagee CWA	6
Cath Hay's (Mackey) stories of her life in Nymagee	7
Entertainment in Nymagee during the 1920's and 1930's - Bill Rooney	9
Metropolitan Hotel, Nymagee - Bill Rooney	12
Letricia Blackmore	12
In Memory of Reg Hudson	13
Jack Wiggins	13
Some Residents of Nymagee from the 1920's	14
Nymagee Station - Bernard Warner	20
Brush Business around Nymagee - Thomas and Bev Ellison	23
Paul and Lynette de Belle	24
In Search - Nymagee District - Robert Meek	25
Memories of Rabbits, Wagons and Dances - Dictated by Norm West	26
Aunty Ede's Memories of Nymagee - told by Mae Miles	26
Robyn Roulston	27
Compiled from memory by Bill Rooney	29
Across the Dying Embers - Bill Rooney	31
Alison O'Keefe, Killarney Heights, NSW	32
Anecdotes on Nymagee - Gordon McMillan	33
Marlene Harland	34
Do I Remember Nymagee? - Pearl Hawney	35
The Swingle Family at Nymagee 1885-1918 - Wendy Gatehouse	36
Vicki Hartley	37
Mrs Pat Bryant, Eagle Vale, NSW	37
Frank Mahy	38
Marguerite (Rita) Dunne (nee Hutchins)	39
A Tribute to Minnie Monaghan - Barry Betts	40
A snippet about the Lorimer's - Janet Couchman (nee Lorimer)	41
The Negative Approach - Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)	41
'Our Lady of Victories', Catholic Church, Nymagee	42
Allan Pope, Cowra	42
The Dillon Family - Bill Dillon	43
Collins Family	47
"The Story of the Dray that Was" - Thelma Wade	54
Nance Fennamore	55
Doug Osborne's Memories of The Nymagee Gun Club	56
John Simmons Shearing Season at 'The Peak'	57
Sqark Barton - "Snake Gully", Nymagee	58
Alice Bridle (Stanford)	61
The Isbester Store - Rhonda A Isbester	63
My Story by Joan Whiteman (Dunne)	64
The Mystery of the Missing Toe Bit - Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)	65
Bob Setter's Story	66
The Kershaw Family - told by Peter	67
Anne Morison	69

Table of Contents

The Snake Story - Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)	70
My Memories of Growing Up in Nymagee - By Dolly Betts (Stanford)	71
What I Remember About Growing Up in Nymagee - Coral Corrigan (nee Lark)	76
Hello out there, this is your Captain calling - Bill Rooney	77
Did I Tell You the Story About ...? Memories of Nymagee by Barry Betts	79
My Grandmother - Nellie Pertz (nee Stanford) by David Betts	84
Reg and Winnie Harland	89
Memories of a Fund Raising Policeman 1977 - 1980	91
Margaret's Memories 1977 - 1980	93
Memories of Days Gone By - Pat Harland (nee Ware)	94
Nymagee and the Marriott Family - Robert Marriott	95
The Levy Family - Monica Lousie Levy (Lu)	98
Elvia Collins (nee Bridle)	99
North, South, East or West - Carmen Gordon	104
Pig and I - Carmen Gordon	105
The Intruder - Carmen Gordon	106
Unusual Garden - Carmen Gordon	107
A Nymagee Policeman 1930 - Bill Rooney	108
My Mum and Dad - Written by Warren Rostron	109
Patricia Hogan	110
Fire in the Loo! - June O'Donnell	111
My Happiest Memories of Nymagee - Rhonda Anne Dunne (nee Eagling)	112
Shirley Kershaw Stories	113
Joseph Whyte and Brothers - by D Markham	116
The Wright and Pusell Family - by Colleen Dillon	118
This is a true story - Authur Unknown	120
Mrs A C Mulcair	121
Alan and Elaine Rogers	121
The Read Family - Charles and Noel (nee Lane)	122
Tregenza Family - by Raymond Russell Tregenza	124
The Nymagee Story - my part by Faye Dobson	124
The Bramston Family - as told by June Davis (nee Innes)	127
Prisk Family - by Joy Prisk	130
Jones & Thomas Families by Mrs G M Riach	131
Little Boy Lost - Glen Dunne	133
Pat Riekson Story	134
The Post Office - Garry Elder	136
The Turner Family Connection with Nymagee	138
Les Rostron - Eremeran Station	140
Pat Mackinnon Story	142
Barry Betts	146
Nymagee Boys - Bill Rooney	148
Nymagee School Children	150
Miniature Debutantes 1965	152
Charlie Sweeting	153

A Brief History of Nymagee CWA

Nymagee branch was first formed on the 8th August, 1925, with 53 members. The branch closed in 1928 with a membership of 40.

This branch re-formed on the 8th September, 1962, with a membership of 35, and was officially opened by Miss Ella Hall (Group President) on the 27th October, 1962, in the presence of 60 members and friends.

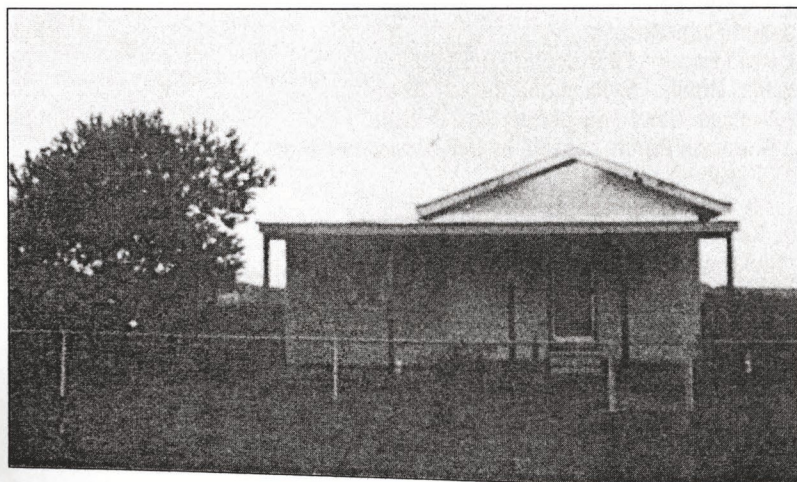
Ten years later, after much hard work and 'money raising', our rest rooms were opened by Mrs Hadley (State Vice President), on 3rd June, 1972. Since then more has been built on to the rooms and the floors carpeted.

In 1925 the office bearers were: Mrs Levy (President), Mrs R Werner (Secretary), Miss L Bodmer (Treasurer). In 1962 Mrs C Reid was President, Mrs Shirley Kershaw was Secretary and Mrs P Fennamore was Treasurer. The present office bearers are: Mrs Dolly Betts (President), Mrs Marlene Harland (Secretary), and Mrs C Read (Treasurer).

This branch works hard to uphold the aims of CWA, by supporting ACWW, knitting for the needy and the hospital visiting committee.

Following each meeting handicraft is held and members learn new skills. Land cooking is well supported also. The ground have been beautified with roses, plants and many trees.

We are well supported by husbands and friends and enjoy our days at the CWA rooms very much.



Nymagee CWA Rest Rooms

Cath Hay's (Mackey) stories of her life in Nymagee

Cath's father, Ernie Mackey, was born at the Mackey farm, which was called 'Rosebank' (4 kms from Nymagee). Ernie married Sabina Roache and they had five children - Cath (born at the Mackey farm in 1913), Florence, Vera, John (born at the Nymagee Government Tank), and William (born at what is now known as Pusell's shop, it used to be a fruit shop).

When John was 18 months old, the Mackey family shifted to Coree, 14 kms from Nymagee. The family's entire belongings were shifted in two drays.

The Mackey children all went to school in Nymagee. The girls boarded at the convent, the boys rode their bikes in each day. They all finished off their schooling with two years at Lithgow, where the family had relatives.

The family's transport was a horse and sulky, in 1924 the family bought a Ford car.

Cath's father, Ernie, had the first two stand shearing plant in Nymagee. He used to hire it out to Fred Wiggins, Tom Smith, Walter Upton, the O'Neil and Witlock families.

The family would walk in from Coree to Nymagee for the dances, and then when the dance was over they would walk home again!!

Cath's mother, Sabina, was one of the first members of the Nymagee CWA, some other members at this time were Mrs Levy, Mrs Nicholson, Mrs George McKinnon. This branch was formed in 1925. When the Nymagee branch closed in 1928, Sabina would travel to Cobarr to attend their meetings. Cath was also a member of the Nymagee branch. Meetings were held in the community hall (where the present Memorial hall now stands).

Cath remembers that Nymagee had a Rugby Union team, the ground was up behind the present Nymagee water supply tank. The racecourse was also up there.

Cath worked at Mrs Norton's baker shop (it was situated where Mr Frank Mahy now lives), where she also sorted the papers for the mail. Nymagee had five mails going out from the Post Office. The mail contractors were: Phil Lilly went to Bobadah, Phil Betts went to Mt Hope, Herbert Moore went to Hermidale, Jack Monaghan went to Canbelego, Oscar Betts went to Shuttleton. They all delivered the mail by horse and sulky.

Nymagee Rugby League Team – around 1932



Reuben Davis, George Pusell, Walter Ford, Frank Carson, Art Luton, Bill Hudson, Ken MacKinnon, Eb McLean, Alf Darling, Jack Mackey, Paddy Kelly, Darby Munro, Trevor McLean, Bert Sullivan

The Mackey's grew their own horse feed and cut chaff for their own use and sold some. The men were wood cutters for the Nymagee mine.

Cath's uncle, Jim Mackey, was a member of the Nymagee brass band. Cath played hockey with Nymagee, she played in the position of centre hit-off. Cath remembers that the Nymagee team was very good and were able to beat all the teams from the surrounding district.

Cath's mother, Sabina used to corn the meat by rubbing it with table salt and then hanging it up in a hessian bag for about a week.

A couple of games the local children used to play were marbles (played in the street), and 'hit the button' where a button was hidden in the dust and you had to hit it.

A special occasion that Cath remembers was a dance at the Mine Tank (in 1929) when the tank was full and the water was three inches deep around the outside of the tank. They were dancing in the water, and were nicknamed the Brolgas. The only lights were lanterns and the music was from a gramophone.

During the Depression years the local young people would put on concerts to raise money to buy things for people in need, and they were known as the Gold Diggers.

Another special occasion in 1929 that Cath remembers is the arrival of 'Snow' Hay, Jasper Bridle, Arthur Lutton, Ronnie Warner and Walter Broome in Nymagee. These young men came from Tumut with an old draught horse and sulky. Just out of Nymagee the sulky broke a wheel, so they led the horse into Nymagee. They were good footballers and were asked to stay on and play for Nymagee. In 1932 Cath married one of these young men, 'Snow Hay'. Snow and Cath had seven children.

One of the characters that Cath remembers a few tales about is Dick Bramston. On one particular occasion when Cath was cooking for a shearing team, her and Peter Kershaw decided to play a trick on Dick. Dick always took a jam tin to his room at night to urinate in during the night. Peter and Cath put some gelatine powder in the bottom of Dick's tin so that when Dick went to empty it the next morning the contents of the tin had set like jelly. Dick was horrified when he saw it and was most concerned about his health.



Dick Bramston

On another occasion, Dick complained to Cath that he had a sore toe. So, for a week Cath gave him warm water to bathe his sore toe. Can you imagine the ribbing that Dick got when he discovered that the reason for his sore toe was a dirty sock up in the front of his boot!

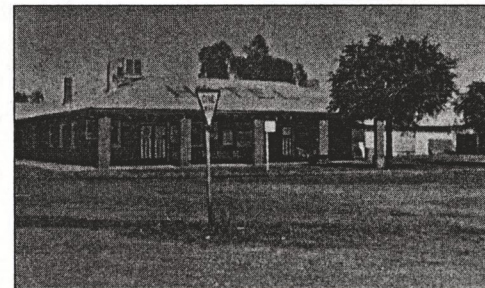
Entertainment in Nymagee during the 1920's and 1930's Bill Rooney

The first entertainment we became aware of in the late 1920's was the local silent movie show, run by the very talented Burton family, in the big old brick building in the main street near the mine hill. Son Athol was a natural self taught mechanic, who set up the plant, lighting, and worked the single projector, with a compulsory gap between each reel.

Mrs Burton provided the very skilful music on the old piano, to the lively action on the screen, mostly cowboys, Tom Mix or Buck Jones, and a cartoon or two, probably Felix the Cat. Daughter Zeta sold lollies, and did a great display of cowboys, Indians, mountains, streams, horses, in the old shop window, which kept all of us kids waiting for Saturday night to come. Admission for children was threepence.

The words came up printed on the screens, so for those of us who could not as yet read, we crowded around the local baker, Jim Norton, who read out loud to his town neighbour, Ah Hooey the Chinese gardener, who also could not read, so with that, and the great music, a grand night was had by all, and we could return home to have nightmares, and wonder how the serial would end up next week ... All eyes were on the mailcoach Friday nights to see if the steel case arrived with the films.

The movies took a great leap forward when sound came and a regular visitor was Amusu pictures from Manildra, with tent, pitched opposite the hotel, generators, lighting, seats, forms, ticket tent, and real live talkies. They came at regular times, and always showed to a full house (tent) and in time saw the end of the silents.



Nymagee Hotel

Then a great leap forward, the enterprising Tom Wright and son, Dudley, set up an open air movie show in their yard behind the shop, next door to the Post Office, and drew great crowds, with some very fine movies. The old town had its very own movie theatre, with its natural air conditioning.

Dancing was always a great form of entertainment, and the highlights being the Far West Children Health Scheme, gymkhana and two great nights of dancing. The Church of England had an annual Ball, and so did the Catholic Church, and the Convent ... dancing Friday night till dawn ... and Saturday night till midnight ... Friday nights were always stopped at midnight for great suppers provided by all the district's great home cooks.

On Ball nights, accommodation was always fully booked, so the out of towners could dress in all their finery, and enter the hall for the grand opening waltz.

An important part of the proceedings were the supply of drinks, with Ethel Werner, and the Werner family tea room and lolly and drink shop, open all night, and of course the hotel open till dawn. The hall was completely surrounded. The local Constable Cecil Marsh patrolled the town in full uniform until the dances began, then changed clothes, and joined the orchestra with trombones and trumpets, and did not even stop to referee the odd fight. Things changed when Marsh was transferred and Oscar Hyland took some educating ... he even had the hide to insist that car drivers should have a driver's licence.

Decorating of the hall was a must, and putting up streamers, etc, usually took a week, with all voluntary labour, led mostly by Mrs Carr, who also took on the job of teaching all the local school kids to dance. This became a problem for the regular Master of Ceremonies, Ted Werner, who spent all night trying to get us off the dance floor. The Ball could not start until after 8.00 pm, when he and his long term fiancée Lily Bodmer, did two circuits of the hall in the old fashioned waltz. Miss Bodmer as she was then known (later Mrs Ted Werner) would climb the stairs to the stage, and play wonderful violin all night, then return to him for the medley, and good night. Great nights. Every race meeting, gymkhana, and athletic or bike races were always a reason to have a night's dancing, and being proper gents any disputes were always settled outside and never in the hall.

On each occasion a truck would arrive from Canbelego loaded with people who did not have a car, and when a dance was held at Canbelego Ware's truck would load up and return the visit. The truck would always go to the football, and occasionally to cricket and tennis matches, and always to the frequent dances at Bobadah.

Travelling shows came regularly and on a few occasions a boxing show put up a tent on the block opposite the hotel, and each year when the circus came (Perry Bros, I think), they set up near the cricket ground and left plenty of camel, lion and elephant dung, and the ring marks stayed for ages.

Never a dull moment.



Behind the Bar Mrs Rooney, Ken McKinnon
Left to Right Charlie Read, Jack Slater, Allen McKinnon, Jack
Rooney, Ernie Mackey, Robert Reid

Local sporting events always drew a large spectator crowd ... shaded parking at the cricket was always crowded, and great cheering and horn tooting was deafening, when Tom Harland Jnr scored his first 100, at 16 years, and at the blistering speed of Dud Wright's bowling ... the speed and accuracy of Dick Collins and Jack Hudson, and the batting consistency of George Pusell. The three left hand spinners Ern Mackey, Phil Betts, Harold Carson hardly got a bowl when the speedsters emerged.

Four tennis courts were never able to cope with the open tournaments, and visits from Bobadah, Cobar and beyond. The hotel on these occasions had both dining rooms open, sometimes for two sittings, for midday and 6.00 pm, and often the soup for the evening meal was much thinner than the midday lot. Often a miracle worker would have been most welcome ... with the great shortage of water (no town supply) the question is ... How did they cope???

Toilets were always accepted as being smelly and two were situated between the hall and Werners shop, and the hotel had two down at the back fence, and may still be there. They required regular shifting as they filled and in desperation Jack Rooney, being an old miner, had some gelignite, and dug an enormous hole for the men's lav ... and in the process landed clods of dirt on the hotel and broke most of the windows on the north western side. After dusk the numerous pepper trees around the pub were well watered, and thrived.

Bike racing boomed, and regular race meetings were held, track meets were held where the aero field is, and road racing started (where else?) right outside the hotel. The big events 10m, was regularly won by Jack Hudson ... 3 miles out and back on the Cobar Road, and 2 miles out and back on the Hermidale Road. Crowds lined the street and saw the riders coming and going, the track meet brought riders from Cobar, Nyngan, Canbelego, all trying to beat the Byrnes Bros from Kilparney. Lots of the locals bought Malvern Star bikes from a Melbourne firm on time payments, around 3 shillings per week. They were nearly all repossessed in 6 months because 3 bob was a hell of a lot of money ... the dole at the time was 8 bob per week. Sad day when the bikes were returned, but somehow the races continued.

The billiard room was popular, and euchre and 500 occupied five or six tables in the hotel billiard room, mostly played for drinks or cigarettes (loser shouts), and the more athletic clients played quoits for drinks.

The Rugby League team had their great moment beating Cobar for the cup around 1930, and never lost it. Isolation saw the game fade.



F/R: Mo Bramston, Paul Story, Bill Dyson, Eric Harland
B/R: Billy Hurley, Ross Berry, Barry Hay, John Harland, Don Hyde,
Peter Kershaw, Jack Conley, Don McLean, Barry Betts
Ball Boy: Darby Warner

Metropolitan Hotel, Nymagee

Bill Rooney

The old hotel was built of timber in the 1885/1890 period.

There were around 30 bedrooms. One room had a private parlour or sitting room. Two rooms had a large parlour or private sitting room. One room had a parlour or sitting room, used as Manager's quarters. The parlours were used for commercial salesmen for displaying goods. The large parlour was used twice a year as a travelling dentist surgery, mostly a Dr Roberts from Leichhardt.

First class dining room seating around 60, and second class seating around 40. Large Billiard Room. Two parlours or tap rooms, and an office. One public bar and a cellar.

A separate building had a large kitchen and pantry. Adjoining building had a large laundry and separate bathroom. Kitchen was 40 yards from the main dining room and 20 yards from the second dining room.

Large front verandah on both streets with a wooden floor. Large side verandah with a dirt floor. Large courtyard verandah leading to the bedrooms, and one bathroom.

Around six large gal tanks collecting roof water. Men's and ladies toilets at the back fence (long drops), two ladies and four men's seats.

Also on the same block was a large toy shop closed in 1927, then used as a saddlers shop (Bill Young), then as a billiard room (Bill Carson).

A 32 volt Moffat Virtue lighting set was installed around 1934. Previous lighting was kerosene lamps and candles in second class bedrooms. Ice was brought in from Warrigal on the mail and wet bags were placed on kegs.

Letricia Blackmore

My parents and sister and brother came from Nymagee. My mother was Ada Harland and she married Walter Mackey.

My sister is Patricia and my brother is Reg. They were born in Nymagee. I was born in Dubbo.

Nymagee was my Christmas Holidays, I spent them at my Grandparents Frank and Elizabeth Harland so my knowledge of Nymagee was limited.

In Memory of Reg Hudson

Reginald George Hudson was born at Nymagee in 1913 where subsequently he was buried next to his sister after dying in Port Macquarie on 31st March, 2002.

Throughout his life, Reg showed a great love for his birthplace and the nearby surrounding rural lifestyle. In his day, he has been grazier, miner, jockey, and subsequently hotelier. (Reg actually won the Alice Springs Cup when his battalion regiment were stationed in Alice Springs prior to being shipped overseas.) He spent many valuable years of his life in the Army and witnessed action on a number of fronts. Reg's love and respect for the Armed Services was typified in his loyalty to the RSL movement as well as his involvement and support in the RSL Sub-Branch and the RSL Clubs.

Reg was a great raconteur and his life provided him with numerous and wonderful reflections on which to generate the abundance of stories that he had to tell. But none of his stories ever matched his affection that he had for his connections to Nymagee and to his favourite dog, Terry.

Reg's later years in Port Macquarie were ones of great friendship with a variety of people, but particularly those in the RSL and Golf Clubs.

He was most respected for his courtesy and gentlemanly behaviour and his appreciation for any goodness and kindness that was shown to him.

Jack Wiggins

My Father, Fred Wiggins, came home from World War 1 and joined the police force, he was posted to Cobar and met and married my Mother, Ethel Hunn, they had three boys, Jim, Jack and Ken.

In 1923 my father was transferred to Bobadah and from there he used to relieve the police in Nymagee every Thursday to Monday, his travelling was all done on horseback a distance of 32 miles.

Police stations in those days held the application forms for returned servicemen to apply for a soldier settlement block of land, my father decided to do this and was lucky enough to draw Morthumbil block and named it Brambah.

I was born in 1923 in Canbelego and then went to live in Bobadah until my parents took up the block.

Life was pretty hard back then, there were no amenities and all mail was delivered from Nymagee once a week delivered to a central mail box and we would ride to collect it and any other goods that might have been ordered.

Some Residents of Nymagee from the 1920's

Compiled by Bill Rooney

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Addison	Bill & Rene	Hotel/Shopkeepers	45/50 years
Ambrose	Paddy	'Bobadah'	
Ambrose	Jim	'Bobadah' Grazier	1930's on
Ambrose	Gerry & John		
Anderson	Sonny & Family	Shearer 'Bobadah'	
Anderson	Fred	Shearing Contractor	
Bax	Thomas James	Grazier	82 years
Bax	Mrs Helena		79 years
Bax	Tom & George		
Bax	Winnie m Reg Harland		
Bax	Imelda m Ted Boyd Jnr		
Berry	Walter & George	Graziers	1968/70's
Berry	Ross	Grazier	1940 on
Betts	Oscar	Mechanic	1930
Betts	Philip & Mrs	Mailman to Mt Hope	1920/30's
Betts	Leslie & Mrs	Grazier 'Shuttleton'	1920/50's
Betts	Barry m Dolly Stanford	Grazier 'The Peak'	
Bodmer	Mark & Mrs	Shire Roads	1920/40
Bodmer	Violet & Pansy	Musicians	
Bodmer	Lily m Ted Werner	Violinist	
Bodmer	Noeline m Dan Collins Jnr		
Bramston	Dick	Labourer	1920/50
Bramston	Ernest (Toddler) & Mrs	Main Roads	1920/50
Bramston	Ernie, Elsie, Velma, Robert, Maurice & Marlene		
Bramston	Fred (The Hawk)		1920/40
Bright	Vincent, Jack & Stella	Musicians	1920/30
Bridle	Jasper m Alice Stanford	Shopkeepers	1930/50
Broome	Walter		1920/30
Burnett	Beatrice m Jack Mackey		1928/70's
Burnett/Mackey	Barbara, Carol, Roger, Maureen		
Burgess	Chas	Graziers 'Restdown'	
Burgess	Charles m Maggie Sullivan		1920/30
Burgess	Arthur	Cobar Pictures	
Buchanan	Frank	Retired	1920/30's
Burton	H A F & Mrs	Post Office/Movies	1920/30
Burton	Athol	Mechanic/Movies	
Burton	Zeta m Jack Hamilton		1920/40's
Byrnes	Alfred (Curley)	'Kilparney'	1920/40's
Byrnes	Eric, Ernest, Clint, Cliffy, Reginald, Eric		
Byrnes	Gladys, Irene		
Carey	Ron	Grazier	1950's
Campbell	Neil & Family	Police Station	1950's
Cameron	Roy & Mrs	Overseer	1920/30
Carr	Jim	Saw Mill	1949

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Carr	Hughie & Johanna	Overseer 'Bedooba'	1920/30
Clarke	Victor	Rabbiter	1940/50
Clancy	Tom & Mrs & son Barry	Overseer	1960/70
Cottee	Walter & Family	Overseer	1920/30
Carson	Bill & Mrs	Hairdresser & Billiards	1920/30
Carson	Frank m Lil Harland	Rabbit Buyer & Butcher	1930/50
Carson	Harold & Doris & Sonny		
Carson	Eileen m Dick McLean	Shopkeepers	
Carson	Jack	Shearing Contractor	
Chandler	Ivan	Mechanic/Inventor	1930/60
Cluff	Stan & Family	Police Station	1947/49
Coleman	Ted & son Tommy		1930/40
Collins	Dan & Family	Grazier 'Belowra'	1920 on
Collins	Dick & Mrs	Post Office	1940/50
Collins	John, Bill, Frances & Marie		
Collins	Ted & Mrs	Shearer	
Collins	Dan Jnr m Noelene Bodmer	Shearer	
Collins	Gus & Pauline		
Conley	Dub & Family	'Belowra' Overseer	1920's on
Conley	Jack	Shearer	
Conley	Dolly m Ted Collins		
Corbett	Biddy m Alby Ware	Cobar Road Post Office	1920/40's
Crampton	Norman & Family	Police Station	1949/50
Crane	Bill	Sawmill	1949
Crow	Harry & Caroline	Farmer	1920/40
Crow	Athol m Mary Mackey		1920/30's
Curtis	Frank & Family	Shedhand	1950/70
Dainton	Roger	Schoolteacher	1970
Davis	Bill & son Sammy	Graziers	1930/50
Dawes	Jack	Saddler	1920/30
Paddy	Devlin	'Belowra' Farm Hand	1920/30
Deeves	Jim & Alex	'Bobadah'	1930 on
Dillon	Bill & Family	Shearer	1940/50
Dillon	Bill m Collen Pusell	Grazier/Shearer	1950's
Dillon	Linda, Susie & Craig		
Doyle	Marion m Vic Barwick	Graziers	1920 on
Dow	Hector	Farmer	1920/30's
Dunn	Harry & Family	Graziers	1920 on
Dunn	Joan m Tom Whiteman		
Dunn	Mable & Brian		
Dunn	Tom m Glen Shields	Graziers 'Iris Vale'	1930 on
Fennamore	George & Sons Ray & Wren	Graziers	1970's on
Fitzpatrick	Jim & Family		1930's
Fitzpatrick	Eileen m Harold Carson		1930's
Ford	Mr & Family	'Bobadah'	1930's
Finn	Mary	Commercial Hotel	1920/30
Francisco	Jack & Kath	Graziers	1950/70
Francisco	Norman & Family	Baker	1930's

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Francisco	Isabel & Alfred		
Fuller	Family		1920's on
Grady	Mick & Mrs	Post Office	1930/40's
Grady	Amy m Arthur Smith	Sewing Teacher	
Green	Ron & Family	Main Roads	1960/70's
Gudgeon	Bill & Family	Mailman/Hermidale	1940/50's
Hay	Tom (Snow) m Kath Mackey	Contractor	1930's on
Hay	Shirley m Bill Knight		
Hamilton	Jack m Zeta Burton	Baker	1930 on
Hamilton	Ivor & Zilla	Mail (Cobar) Mechanic	1930 on
Harris	Dave & Family May, Teresa & Maragret	Labourer	1950
Hayes	Ted & Son	Mine Explorer	1950's
Hertz	Fred & Wife	Carpenter	1950's
Harland	Frank & Family	Mailman/Farmer	
Harland	Frank & Jessie		
Harland	Bill		
Harland	Lily m Frank Carson		
Harland	Thomas	Grazier	1920/70
Harland	Margaret		
Harland	Reg m Winifred Bax	Grazier	
Harland	John m Barbara Mackey		
Harland	James m Doris Hudson	Grazier 'Vaulcluse'	
Harland	Kevin, Eric, Stan & Helen	Graziers	
Harland	TomJnr	Grazier '4 Corners'	
Harland	Ted	Air Force died WW2 Darwin	
Harland	Nellie		
Harland	Eunice Nora m Ron Warner	Graziers 'Nymagee Station'	
Harley	George	'Bobadah'	1920 on
Harley	Kate m Clive Eade	'Bobadah'	
Harley	Robert & Annie Maude	'Bobadah' & 'Nymagee'	
Harley	Shirley m Peter Kershaw	'The Peak' and Hotel	
Hodge	Harry & Family	Graziers	1920 on
Hodge	Bill m Ethel Werner	Shearer/Carpenter	1920's
Hodge	J George & Mavis	Shearer	1920 on
Holder	Reg & Hilda	Retired	1960's
Hudson	Alfred & Wife	Grazier	1920's on
Hudson	William & Family	Grazier/Racehorses	1920's on
Hudson	Jack & Reginald	2nd AIF	
Hudson	Bill Jnr m Hanna Thompson	WW2 POW	
Hyland	Oscar & Family	Police Station	1934 on
Hutchins	Bill & George	Graziers	1950's
Isbester	Family	Shopkeepers/Graziers	1960's
Isbester	George, Athol & Sisters		1960 on
Innes	Bert & Jim		1930's
Johnston	Family son Earl	Government Tank Cobar Rd	1930/40's
Jordan	Jim & Mrs	Butcher	1930's
Keen	Bill & Family Mick	'Bobadah'	1930's on

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Kershaw	Arthur (Cocky) & Mary		
Kershaw	Peter m Shirley Harley	Shearer/Hotel/Grazier	
Kershaw	Kenneth 'Kaktus'		
Kershaw	Matey & Sisters		
Kershaw	Lennie & Norman	Arthur's brothers	1920/30's
Kershaw	Harry & Mrs	Arthur's parents	1920/30's
Keys	William m Juliette Lepine		
Keys	Lucie, Melina		
Keys	Theodore, Victor		
Keys	Leslie	Rabbitier	
Knight	Bill m Shirley Hay	School Teacher	1950's
Levy	Maurice & Mrs	JP Agent	1920/30's
Levy	Lou		
Lilley	Philip m Miss Sullivan	Mailman	1920/30's
Little	Jack	Bootmaker	1920/40's
Low Brothers	Bill & Sammy	Bricklayers/Chimneys	1930/50's
Luton	Arthur m Flo Mackey	Electrician	1930/40's
Mackey	Ernest Alexander	Shearer/Grazier	
Mackey	Sabina Maud		
Mackey	Bill m Eunice Kershaw	Shearer/Grazier	
Mackey	Kath m Tom (Snow) Hay		
Mackey	Vera		
Mackey	Jack m Beat Burnett	Shearer/Grazier	
Mackey	Mary m Athol Crow		1920/30
Mackey	Walter & Family	Carpenter	1920/40's
Mackey	Jack & Mrs Lil	Fruit Shop	
Mahy	Frank & Family	Carrier/Trucks	
McConnell	Donald	Retired	1930/50's
Mackinnon	Alexander & Margaret	Grazier 'Kenmure'	
Mackinnon	Kenneth	Grazier/Hotel	1920/60's
Mackinnon	Flora & Jean & Bill		
Mackinnon	Molly m Eb McLean		
Mackinnon	George & Family	Grazier	1920 on
Mackinnon	Alan m Leila Wright	Stock Agent/Butcher	
Mackinnon	Patricia		
Morris	Family	Graziers 'Canbelego'	1930/50's
McGrath	Bill	Retired	1920/30
McLean	Ebenezer m Molly Mackinnon	Butcher	
McLean	Ernest		
McLean	Richard m Eileen Carson	Shopkeeper/Agent	1920/40
Marsh	Cecil & Thelma & Son Bruce	Police Station	1928/34
Marriott	Bob & Myrtle & Family	Miner with McLernon	1947/50's
McLernon	Ben	Mines at Shuttleton	1940/70
McQuorqudale	'Blue' & Miriam	Shopkeeper	1950
Menzies Bros	Don & Keith	'Bobadah' Graziers	1930's on
McPhersons	Bill, Jack & Don	Sawmillers 'Piney'	1948/54
Monaghan	Jack & Minnie	Shopkeepers	1940's
Morris	Bill	Rabbitier	1930/50's

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Murchison	Donald & Mrs	Retired 'Kenmure'	1950's
Machin	Oswald	Grazier	1930's on
Norton	Jim & Mrs & Clem	Baker/Shopkeeper	
Nicholson	William Horsnell	Grazier 'Glenwood'	
Nicholson	Mary Nolan	'Glenwood'	
Nicholson	Molly m Dick Collins	Post Office & 'Belowra'	
Nicholson	Mick m Dulcie Waterson	Grazier 'Glenwood'	
Nicholson	Michael & Jennie	Grazier 'Glenwood'	
O'Donnell	James Edward	Mines at Shuttleton	
Noonan	Curley	Shearer 'Bobadah'	1940's on
O'Neill	Family	Graziers	1920's on
Patterson	Bill (Banjo)	Retired Carpenter	1950's on
Payten	Family	Farmer's Gardeners	1940's on
Payten	Bill & Joe		
Pertzel	Wally & Family	Farmer	1940's on
Pertzel	Victor m Nellie Stanford	Farmer	
Pusell	Dick & Family		1920's on
Pusell	Jim and sister Cassie		
Pusell	George m Pauline Wright	Mailman/Shopkeeper	
Pusell	Colleen m Bill Dillon Jnr		
Rankin	Family	Graziers 'Hartwood'	1930's
Rae	Captain & Family	Graziers 'Overflow'	1930's on
Read	Charlie & Family	Graziers	1970's
Read	Jack & Family Ida & John	Bootmaker/Saddlier	
Rooney	Arthur m Jessie Magill		
Rooney	Annie m John Walker		
Rooney	Arthur m Miss Gadsby		
Rooney	Lawrence m Josie Reedy		
Rooney	Essie m David Down		
Rooney	John m Fanny Burnett		
Rooney	Fanny (Jim, Bill, Norman)		
Rooney	James m Eileen Williams		
Rooney	William m Beryl Wilkinson		
Rooney	Norman m Joyce Benson		
Rooney	Maggie m Noel Thiessen		
Rooney children	Barry, Judith, Geoff, Paul, John, Peter, Chris, Vikki, Annette		
Rooney children	Robert, Susan, Margaret		
Reedy	Josie m Larry Rooney	Canbelego Hotel	
Selfe	Keith & Family	Nymagee Post Office	1960's
Shaw	John & Jean	Kangaroo Farmers	1970/80's
Shuttle	Lew	Farmer 'Shuttleton'	1930's on
Smart	Don	Grazier 'Kenmure'	
Smith	Arthur m Amy Grady	School Teacher	1935-39
Smith	Tom & Family	Graziers	1920's on
Smith	Max & Merle		
Smith	Charlie & Family	Main Roads	1920/30's
Smith	Harold & Dick & Sisters		
Stutzel	Bob & Family	Police Station	1970's

Surname	First Names	Occupation	Years
Simmons	Pop & Family	Rabbiters (Hartwood)	1960/70's
Storey	Alex m Molly McLean	Graziers	
Southgate	Joe & Family & Edna	Milkman	1930's
Stanford	Alice m Jasper Bridle	Shopkeeper	1950
Stanford	Nellie m Vic Pertzel	Farmers	1930's
Stanford	Ron	Government Tank Gardener	
Stanford	Ernie & Family	Government Tank Gardener	
Stanford	George & Family	'Babinda'	
Stanford	Daphne, (Dolly) m Barry Betts	Graziers 'The Peak'	
Sullivan	Paddy	Labourer	1920's
Sullivan	Tom & Family		1920/30's
Sullivan	Maggie m Charlie Burgess	Waitress	1930/35
Sullivan	Bert & Brothers Jack & Frank		
Tull	Ralph	Main Roads	1960/70's
Walker	John James	Shop/Metropolitan Hotel	1920's
Walker	Annie (Rooney)	Metropolitan Hotel	1920's
Walters	Les & Sally	Graziers	1960's
Wallace	Bobby	'Iron Bark'	1920's on
Warner	Ronald m Eunice Harland	Grazier 'Nymagee Station'	1920's on
Warner	Rhonda, Bernard & Marie & Denise	'Nymagee Station'	
Ware	Albert (Alby) m Biddy Corbett	Carrier	1930's on
Werner	Arthur F	Farmer/Shopkeeper	
Werner	Annie	'The Peak'	
Werner	Eihel Gertrude (Singer)	Shopkeeper	
Werner	Edward m Lily Bodmer	Grazier	1920's on
Weston	Frank & Family	Grazier	
White	Mary	Retired	1960/70's
Whitlock	Bill	Retired	1920/30's
Whitlock	George & Family	Grazier 'Baledmund'	1920's on
Whitlock	Edmund & three sisters	Grazier	1920's on
Wiggins	Fred & Family	Grazier	1920's on
Wiggins	Jim & Family	Grazier	
Wiggins	Jack & Family	Grazier 'Bedooba'	
Wright	Cliff m Merle Smith	Grazier/Pilot	1930's on
Wright	Tom	Storekeeper/Carrier	1920's on
Wright	Mrs Sarah Ann	Shop & Pictures	
Wright	Dudley & Dulcie & Family	Baker/Shopkeeper	
Wright	Pauline m George Pusell	Shopkeeper	
Wright	Leila m Alan MacKinnon		

Cobar Council: Ken Mackinnon, Norm Rooney, Shirley Kershaw, Michael Nicholson

Casuals: Alf Darling, Paddy Kelly, Hubert Lee, Darby Munro, Dud Whiteman, Chum Ryan, Tich Tuckwell, Roy McGuirk, Frank and Neil Singleton (Gun Club), Mook Goldrick, Tom Jones, George Parker, Lloyd Parker 'Bobadah', Mick Sullivan (Hotel), Alex Tomlin (Hotel 1939), Clive Eade, Bill and Dick Morphy, George Reedy (1930 Boxer), Bert Hall (Cobar Gun Club), Neil Brothers, Spadger & Nimble (Hermidale), Joe Rae, Tom Astill, Les Meek, Arthur Jarvis, Tom Astill, Mick Kervin, Ollie Jermyn and Family

Nimagee Station - Bernard Warner

In it's heyday "Nimagee Station" was up to 128,000 acres and also known as Nimagee Run. It was spelt in numerous fancy ways - Nimagee-Nymagee-Nimigee-Nimegee-Mimingee-Mimige- meaning "small plains surrounded by hills".

The run was surrounded by other runs; "Restdown", 99,000 to the north, "Hartwood", 63,000 to the east, "Wirlong", 188,000 to the south and "Nillera", 122,000 and "The Priory", 127,000 to the west.

Around the 1870's George Ellis and Andrew Knox held the Nimagee run in partnership. The original homestead made out of pine logs, "a log cabin", was probably built around that time and actually still stands today. Other buildings were blacksmiths shop, horse stables, barn, horse and cattle yards and a stockman's hut.

From 1881 to 1899 the run was a partnership involving James Davis, James Craig and Major Joseph Pratt.

From 1881 to the late 1898 sheep numbers various from 30,000 down to 10,000 but in the year 1883 sheep numbers dropped from 20,000 to 1,000 and in that year a new 20 blade stand shed was built.

C. Ellerman was the manager from 1881 to 1885 and it has been through his sons that I have gathered some history and records.

Cattle and horses, both draught and saddle were on the run.

From 1899 "Nimagee Station" was owned by Eric and George Killen. In 1936 Eric Killen & Sons sold "Nimagee Station" to Thomas Harland (Snr) - my Grandfather - Pop Harland. By then "Nimagee Station" was about 37,439 acres.

Over a period of time different portions were taken off "Nimagee Station" in the Land Settlement Act. The main blocks were Yarroma, Kenmurs, Coree and Rosevale with other smaller portions going to Glenowen and Kurrajong (The Peak).

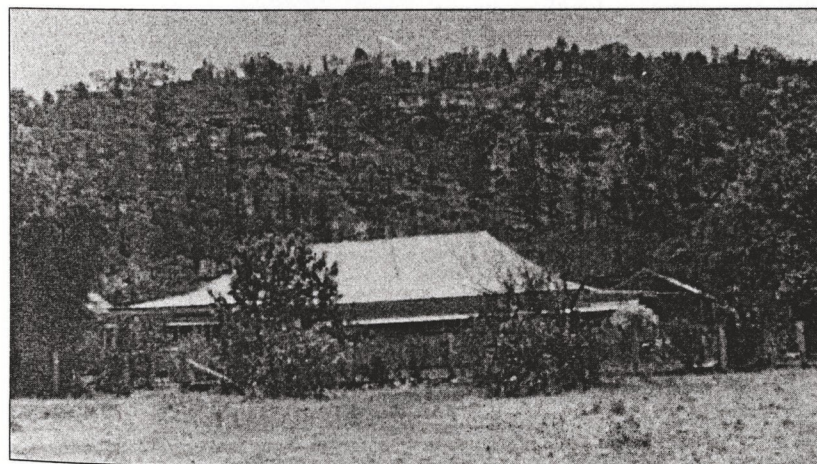
Pop was a former blacksmith who has previously drawn "Four Corners" on a ballot in the early 1900's.

Pop was a very go ahead man and every year would head down to the Royal Easter Show and would come home with pamphlets, seeds and bits and pieces of equipment that he thought would come in handy. He brought the first crawler tractor into the district mainly for tank sinking and Boy Harland spent a lot of time here sinking numerous tanks and de-silting the original old tanks. He had lucerne paddocks and had country knocked down and pushed up in the early 1960's. He also had plans to breed his own rams but never got a chance to get started. After the water drought of 1957-58 he had a bore put down. He brought a Ferguson TEA 20 and all the implements to go with it; from post hole digger to a bench wood saw. One of Pops past times was tinkering with wireless's and radiograms and any other technology that was around at the time including the telephone so I wonder how

today's world of computers and the internet would have affected him - he would have loved it.

Pop was a man who never swore but if something upset him the most you got out of him was "holy ghost". Pop attended the first ever meeting held by The Federal Inland Development Organisation (F.I.D.O.) which was held in Nyngan. As Pop got less mobile he was helped in running the property by my father Ron Warner who had married Pop's daughter, Eunie, back in 1941. Dad had turned up in Nymagee in 1930 during the Depression from Adaminaby with six other men looking for work in a horse & cart but the cart lost a wheel and the horse somehow choked itself and being all pretty good footballers, the policeman at the time, Sergeant March, took pity on them, and let them stay, other "types" were told to move on. Dad made a name for himself in the fencing trade and fenced in numerous properties in the surrounding areas. He also took up shearing and even had his own contract team, rabbiting and kangaroo shooting. When Pop moved out to "Nimagee Station" he built himself a new homestead and Mum and Dad settled in the original "log cabin" homestead.

Pop passed away in 1964 after a very long illness. Nana battled on by herself but she did have her son Tommy Harland (Jnr) for company for a few years. Tommy had come back when Pop was ill. When Pop passed away he handed "Nimagee Station" on to Mum as they had a partnership going in his later years. I had left school at the end of 1964 at the start of the 1964-1966 drought and joined Dad, Mum and Tommy in the work force cutting scrub, feeding sheep and carting water. I carted water for 18 months straight and this is where the bore that Pop had put down really proved it's value again in later dry years. Mum, Dad and I ran the property as a partnership but Dad and I had to answer to Mum. After Tommy passed away Nana lived with us till a stroke put her in hospital where she passed away in 1975 after a short illness.



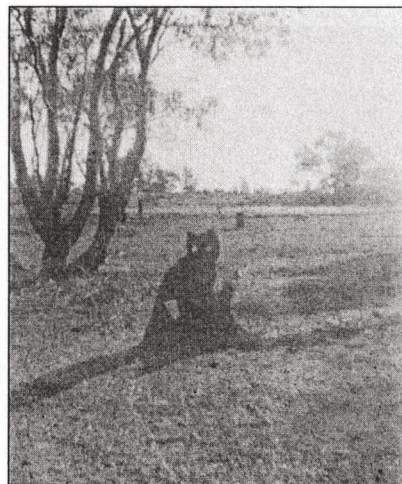
Nymagee Homestead

Dad was a person who loved stock. With sheep he would leave his jeep and walk behind them for miles then walk back to his jeep and he always had good dogs - I've seen ordinary dogs turned into good useful dogs - this was how he broke them in. One time he acquired a new dog so took the dog with him - did the usual thing of walking with the mob but on the way back to the jeep he looked around to see the mob right behind him - the dog had been broken in to follow the person. Dad was another person who never swore and was very hard to upset and could not stand people who big noted themselves. He loved his sport - football, cricket, tennis, boxing, listening to the wireless during the nights when Australia was playing overseas but he did have a bit of trouble with the new technology such as the 2-way radio and the new telephone system. Mum was the same with the sport on TV, sitting up for hours on end doing her knitting.

When Dad first become ill we were shearing and he picked up a wog the team had and he virtually went from the drafting gate to bed, then a stroke and then other problems set in. Dan passed away in January 1990 after a long and painful illness.

Mum was very set in her ways and if any one got on the wrong side of her they soon found out. Mum liked getting out and having a look around where as Dad hated leaving the place. Both Mum and Dad spent a lot of time on all the various committees in Nymagee - the Progress assoc., Bushfire Brigade, Gymkhana committee, the Catholic Church, the Hall Committee, the Rifle Range Club, the old Nymagee Football Club, the various Farmers & Graziers meetings and any other functions that needed people. Mum passed away suddenly in November 1994 and "Nimagee Station" was handed on to me.

Some of the landmarks on "Nimagee Station" are the old "Log Cabin" homestead which has been extensively renovated over the years and is a great atmosphere to live in, the shearing shed which still has the original board and catching pens, the hill overlooking the homestead, the Bald Hill with it's water holes, the Chinaman's Garden with it's mulberry tree, grapevine, quince trees, fig trees on the edge of "Station Creek" and in front of "The Dam" and "The Black Cat", a burnt out stump resembling a black cat and a kitten. The "Black Cat" was wrecked by a mob of shearers coming home from town one night and when Dad asked who did it and no one owned up, he told the contractor he would not be coming back again.



The Black Stump Cat

Brush Business around Nymagee Thomas and Bev Ellison

My husband Thomas Ellison (called Tom) and myself (Bev), first came to Nymagee around 1984 after we had purchased a block of land called 'West Point', 37 kms out, we became visitors quite often. Then my husband Tom decided he enjoyed the country out here. He might retire out this way, when a chap by the name of Noel Buckman offered him a good job 'cutting brush'.



Tom Ellison cutting Brush on 'Kenmure'

So we agreed we would lease the orchard on the Lachlan River where he had lived all his life and give brushcutting a go. Two years he promised, no longer. We took the caravan out to 'Shuttleton' which is owned by Gladys Betts and run by herself and son Tony. We started in April and camped at 'Wilga Wood'. I enjoyed it, if only for the ticks. At one stage I had been bitten 60 times by ticks and had to go back home to Forbes as

get over them. The ticks come off Kangaroo's under the brush which is known as Broom Brush, when they lay down.

Owing to cold weather setting in, Tom decided we may see if we could rent a flat at Nymagee as we heard there were some vacant. Only to find out they were being auctioned. So we decided to go to the auction, and yes! we were the successful bidder, so our life in Nymagee began in 1995. I joined CWA and church and have enjoyed both very much.

Tom decided he could see a good future in Broom Brush and applied for a licence himself. He then went into business himself, cutting on 'Kenmure' owned by Pat Dunne, where he can cut for four years sometimes employing six to eight cutters. The employment was good for Nymagee. There was Brush on 'Coree' owned by Bill Dillon.



Brush being loaded at 'Kenmure'. Bill Bell's Truck from Forbes. Local Blokes "Bird" Wilson, "TC" Stuey, Charlie, Tom Ellison & Bill Bell - Truckie.

The two years had grown longer.

He cut on 'Four Corners' for over two years. The demand for Broom Brush now sees him going to 'Manuka' owned by Stuart and Nancy Mosely. It has been sent to Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. It is mainly used for fences, to keep out noise and dust. Its regrowth even without a lot of rain is great. As Tony Betts is still cutting on 'Shuttleton' on the regrowth after the big fires in 1984. Doug Lever cut on 'Shuttleton' back in 1974.

We will remain in Nymagee, in early 2000 we purchased our home which was previously owned by a lovely old gentleman by the name of Phil Tongue who passed away. We are very happy to be staying for more than two years - permanent more like.

It is strange to say Tom is a descendant of some of the old timers from Nymagee, his Great Grandfather was Thomas Coleman, he was a Bullock Driver out here. He died in 1885 and his descendants lived around here and died around here.

Paul and Lynette de Belle

I am aware that my wife's Great Grandmother, a Mrs Ellen Jane Vivian, lived for a time in the Nymagee district.

We have only just started researching this line of the family tree and as a result we have learnt that she died in 1898 at Nymagee Hospital. The details that we are aware of are that she was born Ellen Jane Murphy in 1848 at Wagga Wagga and married a Henry Charles Vivian at the Presbyterian Church in Hay on the 18th October, 1868. This marriage produced some nine children, seven of these were born in Hay, the other two in the Sydney area. Two of the children died prior to the family moving to Sydney and are buried in the Hay Cemetery. The sixth child of this marriage, a girl Elanor Jane, was married at St Mary's Catholic Church, North Sydney, in January 1898. Her marriage certificate states that her father was deceased, however, we have been able to establish that he had been committed to Morisset Mental Hospital prior to this marriage and in fact he lived until 4th October, 1923.

How, exactly when and why Ellen Vivian moved to the Nymagee area is not known at this stage, however, the following information has been taken from her death certificate.

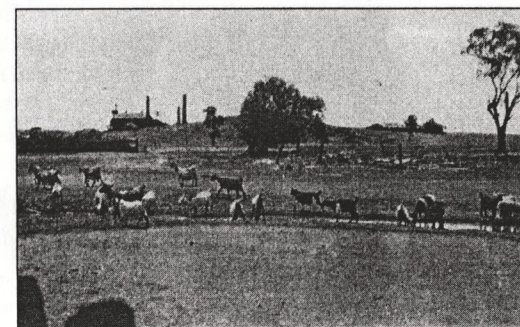
Her occupation was listed as a domestic and she died on the 6th December 1898, at the age of 52 at the Nymagee Hospital as a result of injuries she received in a coach accident. A coroner's inquest was set down for the 21st December. A Dr J Colpe attended her at hospital. She was buried at the Nymagee Cemetery on the 7th December 1898, with the undertaker listed as A Roset and the witnesses were a Patrick Tierney and J Tierney.

In Search - Nymagee District Robert Meek

A small contribution but a year in Nymagee in 1942 as an 11 year old was probably typical of a number of years about that time.

Whilst my father remained at Coonamble managing a farm, as part of the WWII war effort my mother served as Bush Nurse at Nymagee for about 12 months, amongst other nursing experiences she'd previously been bush nurse at Quambone before marrying my father in 1928, he was then Manager of Quambone Station.

She was fairly busy, even pulled teeth if necessary. Particularly she put plenty of stitches in accident victims, my contribution was to keep hot water boiling, I remember one night she put 40 or 50 stitches in the face and head of a drunken shearer who'd crashed his car and gone through the windscreen - there was no shatter proof glass in those days (she never could sew a button on a shirt or darn socks!).



She spent many years in the CWA at Coonamble and Wollongong where she died aged 95 years in 1988.

Primary school was a one roomed building controlled by one teacher, Mr Smith. There were 40-45 students divided into separate classes - there being no 5th Class I was advanced to 6th Class comprising about ten students.

I can remember the Post Office was a fine two storeyed building, the general store was owned by Macleans, the pub looked reasonably new. There were a number of empty houses scattered around, and a few empty shops.

My particular friend was a Bob Bramson who lived in a house at the foot of the mined hill, we spent a lot of time on that hill and probably should not have survived as there were plenty of old abandoned copper mine shafts which we crawled into chasing goats and occasionally rescuing a kid that had fallen in.

Goats played a big part in the life of Nymagee, there seemed to be hundreds in the nearby hills, now and again four or five of us would gather a herd of a hundred or more and drive them into the village, nobody seemed to mind and the goats soon returned to the hills.

Memories of Rabbits, Wagons and Dances

Dictated by Norm West

I used to come over the Nymagee in 1937 with Con Kelly in his beautiful new Buick. We were digging out rabbits near Bobadah at Victor Looney's place, part of the 'Overflow'. Captain Ray also lived there, had a homestead block on the Pangee. Paddy Ambrose worked there when 'Clancy' was about. Some of the rabbit burrows we dug went way down below ground level. We'd get beautiful young rabbits (a 'rack'), and cook them up with spuds and damper on the fire.

We would come over to the old Nymagee Pub before it was burnt down in 1939, when Rooney owned it. The night it burnt down there was a dance at Collarena. The 'Merry Makers' from Nymagee played there with Mrs Pauline Pusell on the piano, Dudley (Doughy) Wright on saxophone and George Pusell playing drums. They were coming home from the dance that night to find the pub was ashes.

I remember other musicians from the district were Ida Read (Harley) and Tom Whiteman who played at regular dances at Bobadah and Nymagee on Saturday nights.

A lot of the families came from Ireland. Cobar would send bullock or horse wagons to Orange for their supplies off the trains.

Aunt Ede's Memories of Nymagee

- told by Mae Miles

My grandparents, John and Fanny Henery, lived in Nymagee sometime between 1909 and 1920. With them were their two daughters, Edith (Aunt Ede) and my younger mother, Myrtle (1908-1964). John Henery was a miner and they lived in one of the mine houses - built of logs and lined with hessian papered with newspapers.

Aunt Ede attended the local State school, Mr William Pasco was her teacher. She also attended the Protestant Sunday School. Aunt Ede can remember stealing fruit from the Chinaman's garden on her way home with the other kids. She remembers a girl by the name of Green (her parents ran the local store) dying as a result of eating green grapes.

Aunt Ede's birth was never registered, so if any records exist of her year of birth (given by her parents to the school or church) I know she would appreciate knowing.

Robyn Roulston

My mother was born in a town called Canbelego in 1913, she was the sixth child. She was affectionately known at Meda. My grandfather at one stage owned a local hotel called 'The Miners Arms'. When the gold mines in Canbelego closed down, my grandfather closed the hotel and moved to a property called 'Koree' not far from Canbelego and Nymagee. My grandfather, Charlie Morris ran sheep and cattle and my grandmother was an invalid, confined to a wheelchair. My mother met and married a farmer by the name of William Henry Harland in 1938, in Nymagee. My Mum and Dad lived in Canbelego, then Sydney, they came back to the bush until Dad died in 1959.

We were alone for a short time, until my mother went and cooked for the shearing sheds, and by that time I was working for Ron and Eunice Warner at 'Nimagee Station'. I did the housework as she had five children. Later on I went to work for Bill and Ethel Hodge so I could earn some money. This was at The Peak, where we used to go and play tennis.



Grandfather Harland with Colin in Nymagee

There was also a lot of gymkhanas and horse races around Nymagee.

When the centenary was on in 1979, I was living in Warren with my family. I went back to Vic and Nell Pertzels place to stay. I had a wonderful time. I loved going back to Nymagee, especially to the flower show every year.

We used to make our own entertainment - Pauline Pusell on the piano, George Pusell on the drums and Billy Hodge on the saxophone. We always had such a wonderful time when the dances were on at the Nymagee hall.

When Barry and Dolly Betts were married my mother did all the catering and made the wedding cake, I can remember it being a windy day and Dolly's veil was flying.

Over the years I had a very good childhood. I went to St. Bridgets College, Marrickville, the school is still standing today. During the school holidays I would come home to 'Koree' on the old steam train and would get off at Mt. Boppy station. Then we would have the car ride home.

My home was a lovely new place, my Uncle Bill and Dad helped build it.

I can remember going to Vic and Nell's place to see them lots of times over the years. One time when we went there the mulberry tree was loaded and we went down to get some. I had a white shirt on, and guess what? I got stains on it. The stain was still on it when I grew out of that shirt.

Over the years I have gone back to Nymagee almost every year for the flower show. The CWA has one each year on the last Saturday in October. We usually stay at Noel Reid's place in the caravan.

After leaving school I became very good friends with Noel's daughter Evelyn. She was a wonderful friend, we were always doing something together. If we were going to Evelyn's place through Gilletts, then on the Mrs. Korch's place, then on to the Hermidale Road, it was a great shortcut. It saved us going all the way around to Nymagee.



Nymagee CWA Flower Show

Every Saturday morning my mother would always have a baking morning. She'd do a lot of cooking and that would only last a week - biscuits, cakes, fruit cakes (Dad's favourite's, he used to love them).

My Aunt Lil and Frank Carson lived in Milford Street, Nymagee. My grandparents, Dad's mother and father, lived in Nymagee, on the hill going towards Canbelego.

We always had such a wonderful time when we were younger, we made our own fun and it was fun to do so. I remember going to a ball when the White Rose Orchestra was playing. We'd dance to the early hours of the morning, arriving home when the sun was coming up on the Sunday morning.

Other places we would go for tennis was Barry Betts's place at Shuttleton. I can remember going there with Bill Gordon, who used to live at "Brura Tank". Other people that I remember were Robin Swan, Michael Nicholson, Bill Montgomery, Roger Mackey, Pat Slater, Betty Waterson (Slater), Elvie Bridle, the Carson family (Carmel, Adele, Garry, Greg). The Carsons all lived in Nymagee until they went to Wilcannia to live.

Sadly, Robyn passed away suddenly before this book went to print. Robyn was a wonderful supporter of the Nymagee CWA Flower Show, always arriving with a suitcase full of exhibits each year.

We will miss her company at our annual show and we are all saddened by the fact that she is no longer here.

Compiled from memory by Bill Rooney

Some notes about Nymagee. Around 1950 the town was very busy, and there always seemed to be lots of people coming and going. There was a timber mill on 'Piney' worked by the Brothers Macpherson Bill and Jack, and the trucks transporting the timber. Petrol and beer and alcohol were still in short supply after the war, and there was always a rumour that the mine would one day reopen, which brought mining hopefuls regularly to town. Ben McLernon often shipped copper ore to Port Kembla from Shuttleton through Hermidale rail. Ted Hayes always could see the end of the rainbow, and so could Danny Collins. The photo of 1950 (see page 3) shows the remains of the old shopping centre, with the hotel rebuilt in 1942 the only addition to the town, although Bill and Rene Addison built a shop opposite the hotel and it was burnt down in a few short years. The main row of shops (closed down before this photo) had about seven shops, including Dick McLean's main store selling almost everything (groceries, produce, clothing, hardware, bikes, etc). Next in the same building were a fruit, ice cream shop and Jack Hamilton's bakery. The next building was used mainly as a butcher's shop, run in turn by A Crow, Eb McLean, Frank Carson, Ken Mackinnon, but not in that order. Also a Stock and Station Agency by Alan Mackinnon. Below these buildings remain the kitchen of the Commercial Hotel (demolished) later after closing, as a lolly shop by Mary Finn. The shop used by Pauline and George Pusell, was the old Commercial Bank, used as a residence by the McLeans until they left for the city. The next old building was the original Post Office, later used as a residence by Bill Carson and family, whose barber shop was adjoining the Hall. He later, in the '30's, also ran a billiard room next to the old Metropolitan Hotel, which were both burnt down around 1938. Next to the Hall was the Werner shops, and café run for many years by Ethel Werner (Hodge) and later by Minnie Monaghan, Molly Mackinnon (Storey), the McQuorndales, the Bridles, and the Isbester family. At the end of the road the old building was used by the Burton family as a garage by Athol, and a silent movie show by Mrs B and Zeta (Hamilton). Mrs Burton played piano during the screening.

Another main store was Tom Wright's (shown behind the flying doctor's plane), which had the first manual petrol bowser. He brought all his goods by horse wagon from Boppy Mountain siding, even as late as 1950. The petrol came in 4 gal tins boxed two to each wooden box. The same for kerosene. His store sold a great variety of goods, and clothes, and was operated by his wife, and children, Dudley and Pauline (Pusell) and Leila Mackinnon. In later years, pre war, he had an open air talking movie show in his backyard, between the shop and his home, and drew good crowds. Dudley Wright had a bakery next door to the Hotel. Next





Bill at Wright's home
note Tom Wright's wagon in background

nuns direct from Ireland, and housed a small number of boarding students. The churches, Catholic and Church of England, and the convent were funded by each having an annual ball and donations from race meetings, and the public. The nuns turned out a large number of musicians of various grades and closed in 1937. Among the good musicians were Violinist Vincent Bright, and Lily Bodmer (Werner), Reg Harland (banjo) and Pauline Wright who played in the local dance orchestra for many years. Nearby is the present Church, and further along 100 yards was an old shop which was used as the school, and next door on the present Church of England site was a large white Church of England, later demolished. Down on the flat behind this area were a number of homes, occupied by some very prominent families, some of whose names are listed on the photocopy. Up from the Post Office were the very imposing buildings of the police station, and courthouse, and the fine brick home of old time police sergeants. Prominent residents were Constables Senior, Marsh, Hyland, Bartholemew, Wilkinson, Cluff, Crampton, Campbell (who is standing near the plane in the photo). At the time of the photo the home was occupied by Ken Mackinnon, local grazier and Cobar councillor.

Not in the picture are sites of the Chinese gardens, past Nortons Bakery, where there were up to 30+ Chinese working under the supervision of Ah Hooey, a converted Catholic (for years the town was famous for having the largest fig tree in Australia, not verified) and down behind the mine tank was the area known as Cornish Town where the Cornish miners lived. Hooey drove around the town with his horse drawn cart laden, and sold his produce to the townspeople during the 1930's, and as there were no Chinese ladies the colony faded. The story that the very wide area in the main shopping area was to allow the horse and bullock wagons to turn, after unloading makes sense. Aside there was a very productive Chinese garden at Gilgunnia, through to 1930's.

to Wright's store is the lovely Post Office building, which changed colour in 1950, when the building was painted by the Postal Department, with a team from Dubbo. Postmasters included Mrs Graham, Mrs Burton, Mick Grady, Dick Collins, Keith Selfe and Len Von Schill.

On the hill behind the Post Office was the Catholic Convent staffed by three nuns, some young



Leila Wright & Bill Rooney

Across the Dying Embers — Bill Rooney

These are my Regrets - when I am right no one remembers, when I am wrong no one forgets.

Apart from the efforts of your male ancestors, we are all the products of some very tough women, who had a long battle with the elements to bear and rear the offspring that gave us our start.

Back in 1882 Clara Beatrice Clark was born at 'Green Swamp' somewhere near the village of Bathurst and a mere 16 years later married Elija Wilkinson at Waldang, and proceeded to have and rare ten children, and we are not sure if she lost any but the law of averages indicate that living under the most primitive conditions some may have gone.

I am amazed at knowing her, at how well groomed she was, and how devoted she was to a difficult partner, and rearing and educating a fine family including your mother, and the uncles and aunties you knew in the hovel they lived in, and others in a worse condition at dirty old Lithgow. As I have said, I was lucky to get the pick of the litter. Although she was stricken with cancer, she survived long enough to nurse her partner until he died, in March 1961, and she followed in July 1961. A tough little lady and if he had lasted till 2000 she would have too.

Another was Jessie McGill, a lass born in Ayr, Scotland, in 1857, and how she arrived I do not know, but married Arthur Rooney in Toowoomba in 1877, bore ten children around Nymagee and buried her husband at Nyngan in October 1890, a few months before the tenth was born (Maggie Rooney). She lived in a humpy 5 miles north of Nymagee, reared and educated her family, and her baby Maggie became a wonderful piano player and teacher. She must have gone to the convent at Nymagee with her father. She was completely blind when I first recall her around 1928, and lived at 110 Wilson Street, Newtown, always with her loving and devoted offspring, and a wonderful smile, dressed in black, and mourning her husband who died 45 years earlier. Great love. She died in June 1935. How did she do it? A woman of great love and undying faith, and compassion and understanding.

Ada May Milton married Christopher Burnett, somewhere, and followed the mines around the country wherever he could get a job. Their first child, Fanny Martha Burnett, was born at Hillston, NSW, on 7th July 1899, the same birthday of another famous Australian to be, J B Redding, and later started school at Shuttleton, NSW. The rest of her children must have been born at Canbelego, where they lived in a miner's shack, until he died from the bubonic flue around 1918, leaving her with a family of eight (including my Mum) and a crippled sister, Maude Milton. She moved to Sydney and lost the youngest boy, and lived in extreme poverty, rearing three boys and three girls, on the dole and whatever money my Mum, who worked in the Canbelego pub, could send down. She also received some help from her other sister, Aunt Fanny Denshire. I first knew her when she lived in a terrace house in Regent Street, Newtown, and we moved to Nymagee in 1927. Her great

joy was when her daughter Ada was married around 1930, and the shock came when he moved in with them, and brought his two young sons with him. Aunt Beat had to move out to make room, and came to Nymagee to look after us three boys, and finish her schooling at the convent, and then work as a waitress/housemaid at both Nymagee and Canbelego until she married. Ada's husband moved in, never worked again, and kept Ada in a job at the local fish shops so he could hone his beer drinking skills and bully the household, including Gran and anyone who crossed his path. Some reward for Gran who herself was often evicted until he sobered up. She died in Alexandria where Ada had a fish shop in 1958.

Fanny Martha Burnett, as you know, was born at Hillston in 1899, and worked at the Canbelego Hotel as a cook and bar attendant and lived with her parents and family in a humpy. Quite a palace for the time and conditions. Gran kept them well groomed, and tried to have them educated under extreme difficulties. In retrospect I am sure that her daughter Fan made a resolve that any family of hers would not live like she did, and she chose a man who, as far as I know, never worked for wages. He was forever a contractor, carting wood with his father's drays, and in Sydney contract laying the Mosman Sewerage pipes until they had the call to Nymagee in 1927. Her main object was to provide her family with the best education she could afford, and all else was overlooked. To her it was an obsession and her ultimate plans for us were interrupted when the war started, and we did not return home at the completion of school. For the rest of her life she tried to get her boys back, and tended to overcrowd us and as she could never mother the grand kids, small gifts were offered. With a start such as she had, I think she 'done good'. I am pleased she found my Dad.

Alison O'Keefe, Killarney Heights, NSW

My Dad was Charles Swingle. On the death certificate of Charles Swingle, the date of 6th August 1889 at Nymagee, as the date and place of marriage of James Swingle and Alice Smith.

The marriage certificate of James and Alice is dated 24th October 1918 at the residence of Mr Levy, Goold Street, Nymagee. Why the second marriage? I do not know.

My Dad, Charles, told me when he was a boy, he carted water for his mother to wash the miner's clothes at Nymagee. I have no idea which mine he worked in. Somebody may have lists of the employees and the names of the mines about that time. I was given the impression that the family moved to Tottenham when the mines at Nymagee were less operational.

Anecdotes on Nymagee — Gordon McMillan

My father, Ernest McMillan, was born on 28th June, 1881, at Collawarie Station, on Narran Lake, north of Bourke. He worked as a copper smelter in the open cut mine at Cobar. As the mines closed, he followed on to Coolabah, Canbelego, Nymagee and Tottenham. While at Nymagee he met and married Lu Lu Brick. They were married in Cobar, August 1907. My father is a brother of Rena Bannister who, as you probably know, married Dub Bannister. I am a cousin of Roy, Billy and Una.

My sister, Gloria, met and married Lionel Hooper, from Tullamore (1937). They took over a station, Rosedale, in the Nymagee district, about 1939. However, due to severe drought conditions, they were forced to abandon the property and returned to Tullamore. My sister lives in Forster and is 91. She often recalls the harsh days spent at Rosedale, things were very primitive. Mail once a week, no neighbours for 22 miles, no electricity and the water was not drinkable.

We have many fond memories of the outback and I can still smell the gumtrees. I have visited Cobar a few times, I had a gravel truck on the main roads. We did the bitumen from Nyngan to Wilcannia around 1970.

Well, I could go on and on about the outback, it will always be prominent in my mind.

The Family Tree - McMillans

William McMillan and his wife resided at Wellington, NSW. They are the Great Grandfather and Grandmother of Paul, Ian and Neil McMillan, their son was Alexander. William was a stockman and a shepherd.

Alexander was born at Murrumbidgee on 21st August, 1853, he was baptised in Wellington on the 30th December, 1853. He married Louisa Sharpe, the daughter of James and Elizabeth Sharpe of Orange, NSW. Alexander and Elizabeth are the Great Grandparents of Paul, Ian and Neil McMillan. Alexander was a stockman and a reputed horseman. He carved emu eggs in various designs and plaited stock whips from kangaroo tails. The tails were cut into fine strips lengthwise and then plaited. He spent many years as a stockman along the Darling River and outback NSW. Alexander and Louisa were married in Dubbo on 26th July, 1873. They were living at Collawaroy Station, between Bourke and Walgett, close to Narran Lake. Narran Lake is a well known tourist resort renowned for bird and animal life. Alexander and Louisa had five daughters and two sons.

Ernest, one of their sons, was born at Collawaroy Station on 28th July, 1881. He was registered at Bourke, Ernest was the Grandfather of Paul, Ian and Neil McMillan. The family moved to Cobar where the copper mines were opening up. Ernest, or my father, was a copper smelter in the Great Cobar Mine in the Main Street of Cobar. His father, Alexander, was a labourer in the mines, also. My father's sister, Rena, married Dub Bannister, who operated the butcher shop and

worked in the mines also. The Bannisters are a well known family in Cobar to this day. My father was a member of one Town Band. He played the cornet and the euphonium. Cobar boasted many bands and they would travel to Dubbo for parades and competitions. These trips entailed travelling long distances by horse and carts and wagons from all over far west NSW. It would take a week's travel to complete the journey.

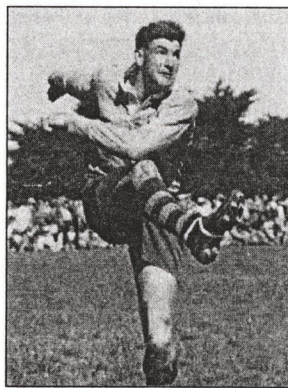
My father married Lu Lu Alice Brick, a domestic or maid in Cobar, on 6th August 1907. As new copper mines were opened the workers travelled to the new mines also. As mining was a primitive state in these times the mines were abandoned because of the depth of the diggings. As you are well aware, these mines have been re-opened in Cobar and have yielded a fortune in all the heavy metals and also in light metals.

My mother and father moved from Cobar to Coolabah, Girilambone, Canbelego and Tottenham. During this period of time they lost five children at birth. When they moved to Sydney due to the mines closing, they resided at Balmain where Glory was born in 1911. They then moved to 166 Chapel Street, Marrickville, where I was born on the 7th May, 1919. We moved to Punchbowl when I was 2 years old, my father built a weatherboard house which still stands at 16 Gowrie Avenue. I lived at Punchbowl until I enlisted in November 1939. I served 6 years and 3 months in the Royal Australian Air Force, 4 years of which was spent in the Middle East and North Africa. After returning home from Italy in 1945 I was posted to Parkes, in Central NSW. I was discharged in 1946 and opened up a motor repair shop and service station at Peak Hill. I married Ila Anne Casey in 1947, we had three sons, Paul, Ian and Neil.

Marlene Harland

When the Western Division was formed, a bloke called Tom Harland drew a block called '4 Corners', just out of Nymagee. His son, Reg, was born in 1907 and was schooled in Nymagee. He rode his pushbike to and from school each day. He milked the cows and always gave the nuns a bucket of milk. In 1928, Reg bought 'Yarranvale'. Winnie Bax came to Nymagee with her family in 1927 and drew 'Hill Plain'. Reg and Winnie married in 1932 and lived at 'Yarranvale' in an old shack. The new house started to be built in 1937.

They had four sons, this bit of a story is about the third eldest, and now my wonderful husband. Bruce was educated at the Cobar Catholic School



Bruce Harland

and later at St Josephs College, Hunters Hill. During the school holidays, he played football in the Lynch Cup for Nymagee. In 1959, he began to play for the Nyngan Rugby Club, and then played league for Cobar in 1960. Then back to Rugby Union for Cobar in 1961. Bruce was selected to represent Australia in the Wallaby side to tour New Zealand in 1962. Bruce was the first International in any sport from the outback centre of Cobar.

Bruce wasn't just a good footballer, he was good at all sport, including cricket, athletics, he cleared 6 foot to win the high jump in the GPS. His victory was St Joseph's first ever in the event. He was the 1958 GPS open high and broad jump champion. He has won the Bobadah Mile footrace a couple of times. He loves tennis and we play every fortnight in Nymagee, weather permitting (unfortunately rain hasn't interrupted tennis so far this year). We both live at 'Yarranvale', love life, love the bush and love each other. Bruce is a bit shy and doesn't brag about his Wallaby days, but we're all proud of his achievements.

Do I Remember Nymagee? — Pearl Hawney

The Goldrick family: Eric, Jack, Dorothy (Dolly) and myself (Pearl), were born in Canbelego, and lived there until the early 'twenties'.

Dorothy lived for several years in Nymagee and then Cobar where she married Mick O'Malley. All my siblings are now deceased.

I will never forget that happy, sprawling little village of Nymagee. My friend, Clara Mitchell, and I loved to dance, and the Nymagee dances always fascinated us. As we were not allowed to attend dances without our brothers, we would literally crawl to them for weeks prior to an event. Once at the dance, however, we would completely ignore our brothers and refuse to dance with them. Payback time occurred on the way home, when Clara and I were made open and close the gates as we drove through properties (no ramps in those days), and then run after the car which had been driven a little further along than necessary.

Dances held at 'Rosevale', the Burgess property, were also very popular. The Burgess family were highly respected in the district and held a social weekend on their property a couple of times per year. They were wonderful hosts and always made us feel welcome.

A dance was held on Saturday night until the early hours of Sunday morning, followed by a day of tennis commencing at dawn. Another dance was then held on the Sunday night, before leaving to drive home around 2.00 am on the Monday morning.

Beauty aids were very limited when preparing for our social events. We always carried our hair tongs (which we heated over a candle), and would sneak cochineal from the kitchen to apply to our lips when we arrived in Nymagee.

The Swingle Family at Nymagee 1885-1918

Wendy Gatehouse (nee Swingle), Bribie Island, Queensland

James Swingle arrived in Nymagee in the mid-1880's after working at the copper mines at Cobar from at least 1882. He worked at his occupation of smelter at Cobar, Nymagee and later at Tottenham. Born in the North of England about 1850 to parents John Swingle and Elizabeth Watson, James came to Australia in 1867, settling first in Victoria before moving to NSW. The family lived in Nymagee for 33 years from 1885 to 1918.

In 1887 his wife, Alice, (formerly Smith) gave birth to their first son, Albert Henry (my Grandfather). In 1889, a daughter Jessica May was born and in 1892 another son Charles. The family lived in Cornish Town and the children attended the first Nymagee School.

Alice was born to Thomas Raine and Teresa Maria Redmond at Bathurst in 1847. Her first marriage was to (Fredeick) Patrick Smith in Sydney in 1868. They had two children, daughter Finetta (1869) and son William (Will). Patrick Smith, a dryman, is thought to have worked in the Western District of NSW.

In 1887 Finetta Smith married another Nymagee resident, James Richards. By 1890 her first husband had died and she remarried to Edward Roberts. Their son, George W Roberts, was born in Nymagee in 1891. Two more children were born at Mt Hope - Edward (1894) and Myrtle (1897). By 1901 Finetta and James Richards were living in Cobar where another daughter, Margaret W, was born.

Will Smith also worked at the Nymagee mine. He is believed to have married and had a family in the district.

When Albert Henry Swingle left school aged 10 years he went to work at the mine and later worked at Illawong and Wrightville. In 1909 he married Mary May Daly (born at Grenfell 1890) and they had a son James, born 1910. The baby died 19 hours after birth and is buried in the Cobar Cemetery. Albert then joined the Public Works Department where he studied engineering by correspondence. His career took him around Australia constructing and maintaining lighthouses and their accommodation. Seven years after his death in 1940 the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service honoured him by naming a lighthouse supply vessel A H Swingle in his memory.

Jessie Swingle married John Gilbert Park at Nymagee in 1906 and their son, Edward John, was born. After the death of her first husband she married Edward Berghofer at Bathurst in 1916. Another son was born in 1918. Jessie died in Sydney in 1923.

Charles Swingle worked at the Nymagee copper mine after leaving school. He moved to Tottenham with his parents James and Alice in 1918. Here both James and Charles purchased land that remained in the family until 1949. Alice Swingle died at Tottenham in 1920 and James Swingle in 1927. They are both buried in the Tottenham Cemetery.

Vicki Hartley

There's not a lot of information to share but through my own researching I have discovered that lots of little bits piece together eventually and can tell a wonderful story. So for what it's worth, here's my 'little bit'.

My great grandfather, Henry 'Harry' Hart worked for Cobb & Co as a groom. He was stationed at many places in the far west, including Minore, Nidgery, Weemabah, Canonbar, Nyngan, Narromine, and Nymagee, throughout the years of 1882 till approximately late 1890's. The family were definitely at Nymagee in 1885 and 1886 and were possibly there for longer. They had a child that was born and died in Nymagee and the details of these are as follows:



Cobb & Co at Nymagee Post Office during 1890's

Birth:	Registration 19485	Death:	Registration 09546
Date:	19th August 1885	Date:	7th September 1886
Place:	25 Mile Tank, Nymagee		
Name:	Martha Hart		
Sex:	Female	Sex:	Female Age: 1
Father:	Henry Hart		
Father's Age:	41	Occupation:	Groom
Mother:	Jane (formerly Paine)	Cause of Death:	Thrush
Mother's Age:	30	Duration:	2 days
Informant:	Jane Hart, Mother	Buried:	8th September 1886
	25 Mile Tank	Where:	Nymagee
Nurse:	Mrs Bruce	Undertaker:	Anthony Daly
Registered:	1st October 1885 Nymagee	Witnesses:	W Perry & A C Daly

Mrs Pat Bryant, Eagle Vale, NSW

A few years ago (about 1993 or 1994) my husband and I were trying to trace some family history on his side.

We obtained his father's birth certificate and found that his Grandparents had been married in Nymagee - we don't know how long they lived there. His father was born in Frogmore, near Boorowa.

So we went away for a few days, and visited these places. We looked through the cemetery at Nymagee but didn't find anything.

The writing on his father's birth certificate is hard to read - the date of the marriage looks like 7th November 1887 or 1889. The names of his Grandparents were Rebecca Perry and Charles William Bryant.

Frank Mahy

I came to Nymagee in 1950 with my mother, Janice Annie Mahy. We lived in Norton's Bakery until 1960. The house I live in now was built then, Banjo Patterson was the builder, Banjo was a builder around Nymagee. Jack Conley and Jack Mackey (who came from Canbelego) helped Banjo. I carted all the timber, it was cut at Lawson's Saw Mill, which was at "Sunset". I designed the house and Banjo cut it all out. My mother died in Sydney in 1960, she died before I got the new house built, it was to be a surprise for her.

I bought Bill Addison's carting business and he shifted up to Dudley Wright's shop, that is where the Dillons now live. Bill Addison lived in a house opposite the CWA rooms, he would go up to the shop each day. I carted most of his goods for the shop from Dubbo. The Addisons later built a shop opposite the hotel, where John Hardwick lives. I always wore white overalls for work, Mum washed these with coca cola in the wash water, the overalls were always snow white, Mum would not have any other coloured overalls.

I was a haulage contractor in Cobar for four or five years before I came to Nymagee, then I did the same work in Nymagee until 1992, I had to give it up because of my health. I carted one of the boilers from the Shuttleton Mine to The Peak where it is still used as the supply tank for the house.

I carted for Ben McClennon to the Shuttleton Mine and the Mount Hope Mine, a lot of the loading came from Cobar. I carted an average of 3,000 bales of wool a year from around the Nymagee district.

I also carted a lot of equipment for Long Year Diamond Drill, they were drilling around Nymagee and Orange. I took one load from Nymagee to Orange, then a couple of months later I picked up the same load from Orange and took it to Adelaide. Then I picked up a load at Adelaide and took it to Bourke Town in Queensland. I went from Bourke Town to Normanton, there I picked up 112 bales of wool and took it to Brisbane. That trip was from Nymagee to Orange, Adelaide, Bourke Town, Normanton, Brisbane, then home to Nymagee, I was away from Nymagee for about three weeks. That was one of the longest trips I ever did and I never had a breakdown or a hold up for the whole trip.

On one particular occasion I picked up about 100 bales of wool from 'Baldmund', the Weston's property. I was pulled up by a Policeman between Parkes and Forbes at a checkpoint. I had four tiers on and this was illegal. The Policeman was going to throw the book at me. He saw the name Nymagee on the side of my truck and asked if I knew the Weston family at Nymagee. I told him I had the Weston's wool on, after that we had a good yarn about Nymagee and the Weston family AND he did not book me (I don't know if he forgot or I was just lucky).

I used to do a lot of mechanical work around Nymagee and district, I qualified as a Mechanic at Cobar Motors which was W S Brennan's Garage in Cobar, Alf

Collins was my boss, I still do a bit of mechanical work.

I drove the Nymagee school bus for 21 years. My first 'bus' was actually a car, then I bought a station wagon. I then bought a Mitsubishi L300 bus, however, when the inspector came around he measured the width of the door and it was 1 and 3/4 inches too narrow, so I wasn't allowed to use it. Finally I bought a Toyota bus. My bus run was about a 200 mile round trip, I had nine children on the run. In 1992, even though I still had nine children on the bus, the bus run was closed down.



Frank Mahy's School Bus
Catherine Harland and David Betts

I enjoy my life here in Nymagee, I have no wish to shift to anywhere else to live.

Marguerite (Rita) Dunne (nee Hutchins)

I wish to pay tribute to the days of my life I spent in the district of the Copper Mining Town of Nymagee NSW, 1925-1933 when I married and moved further afield.

Many happy hours were spent celebrating in the Nymagee Town Hall. The young ladies of the district assembled in the home of one of the married ladies of the town to freshen up and change into their evening gowns after a day at the races. The dresses and accessories were as beautiful and fashionable as those seen in the nightclubs in the cities. Our partners arrived and after being paired off by our chaperones we all proceeded to the Town Hall where the various charities held their Balls. We enjoyed many a night of dancing until dawn. During the evening we sat down to supper supplied by the ladies of the town. During the break the floor was waxed and prepared for the dancing to follow. Congratulations were offered to our MC Ted Werner, a very jovial happy man. A man loved and respected by all. The music was supplied by local women on the piano, accompanied by a gentleman on the piano accordion. After the ball we all piled into our horse drawn vehicles and trotted on our merry way home to a hot breakfast and a few hours sleep before our day began. If it were Sunday morning we would breakfast and change at our hostess's home ready for Service in the local church. We were well chaperoned by these kind ladies. After church or shopping in the town the place to congregate to meet friends and neighbours was Ethel's Tea Shop where a tasty tea served with locally baked cakes and scones were popular.

The tennis courts at Keighrans were one of the first in the district to hold weekend tennis parties. Attended by families of the district. My brothers George and young Bill were pressed into service to get the courts ready for the Sunday matches. The net was checked and attached to the posts, making sure it was the right height. The white lines had to be marked out, the powder was made from white Copi obtained

from the bank of a local dam, ground into powder and mixed with water and ran out in straight measured lines as set down by the rules of the game. The friends that gathered were our neighbours as well as the Bush Brothers who travelled the district attending to their parishioner's souls. Also young men from the local stations often joined us on these occasions. These lads were mainly young English men out here working as boundary riders and in training as Station Managers. The lads were on Colonial experience. One amusing incident was one young man rang a local matron and asked her what he should wear to play tennis. She assured him whatever he chose would be acceptable. The lad took her at her word and turned up in Jodhpurs, much to his embarrassment and the amusement of the other players in their tennis whites.

I recall musical evenings in one another's homes. We had all been encouraged to learn a musical instrument. Some played the piano, violin or even the gum leaf. We were all expected to take our turn to entertain our friends. One well known lady was Aunt Dolly Betts who played the piano and could thump out a rousing tune. Her family were well known for their hospitality at their home Shuttleton.

Those were the days of kerosene lamps and horse drawn vehicles. It was known as the horse and buggy days. The friendship of those days was called the Spirit of the West and you called all neighbours friends.

A Tribute to Minnie Monaghan - Barry Betts

Minnie Monaghan had the shop next to the hall. I can remember it well, during the 1940's. I am not sure when she moved to Dubbo. She worked it with her husband, Jack. However, Jack mainly worked away droving and on properties.

There was a boardwalk outside the shop, with two big glass windows either side of the door.

The shop was a long building with a long hallway going right down to the kitchen. I can remember there were three rooms with velvet curtains on the doorways. The shop had two counters on either side, one side was smallgoods and drinks and the other side was lollies and, on mail nights, papers and bread. So as very young kids we had to make up our mind quick - "no running from one side to the other", but I think some of us used to do this for devilment.

The shop had high ceilings of mainly varnished boards, so the kero lighting was very dull. Minnie was very strict but a pleasant lady.

However, on dance nights all the young people would go in for refreshments. The young fellows would sit on the counters and Min would really go crook, but still this didn't last for long. So she decided to put tacks along the edge of the counters with their points sticking out. This worked!! All the young fellows started walking around with 3 corner tears in their duds!!

A Snippet About the Lorimer's - Janet Couchman (nee Lorimer)

David Lorimer bought and moved to "Truganini" in 1928. He lived here in a hessian walled hut until he built his first home in 1935 when he was married.

David and Mary had two children, Janet and Bruce. David bought "Hill Plain" in about 1950, after leasing a property at Gilgunnia for a time. They made "Truganini" their home until after both David and Mary died in 1971 and 1972 respectfully. The family sold "Truganini" to the Weston family in 1974.

The first home was burnt down in the summer of 1949, after which the family moved to Nyngan while making 72,000 cement bricks to build a new home. He wasn't going to have the next house burn down! It was built with double cement brick walls, We moved into the new home in 1954.

One of Dad's stories of his early days was having a billy with a lid on to send with the mailman to bring his butter so it would not melt away on the way out. This was in a horse and cart. When the mailman bought his first truck and the butter did not arrive Dad at times suspected the mailman used the melted butter in the diff to keep the truck going.

The flying Doctor, Dr. Young, used to fly into Nymagee once a month I think, during the 1940's landing in the main street. Mum used to go for her monthly check up, then flying with the flying doctor to Forbes Hospital where my brother was born. They came home again with the flying doctor landing in a cleared paddock near the hut at "Yalgo" where Frank Weston first lived. I remember lighting fires with my Dad to mark out the runway as it was just after dark when they arrived.

During the very wet year of 1956 (we had 36 inches of rain) the mail could not get through for months. Wren Fennamore used to fly his plane into Nymagee, landing in front of the post office to collect the bread and mail and do drops to neighbours on his way home. We always knew what sort of bread it was by the height it bounced - the lighter the bread the higher it bounced. It made a nice change from scones and damper!

The Negative Approach — Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)

My job this day was to go and bring the cows home for milking. They were supposed to be down near Jolly Jacks.

On my pushbike I set off and found the cows and calves near where they were supposed to be.

Coming home, the cows ambling along and me day dreaming as usual, I thought 'Gosh, where am I? I don't know this place.' Somehow I had turned right around and had gone back to where I started.

How easy to get lost.

1915

*"Our Lady Of Victories",
Catholic Church,
Nymagoe*

*My granpa who settled
near the Auguste convent,
bought the Nymagoe farms
out from Tipperary, in
England.*

*The farms looked like oases
only they were clear.*

In 1905, seven of Joseph's Nuns
were at the Nymagoe Convent,
Sister Josephine, Sister Agnes,
and Sister Mary were the
gardeners. The nuns took
care of the side of the
Catholic Church to plant
out "Our lady of Victories",
garlic and all.
They were grown and cared
for by the nuns and the
parish, who were,
Mam, Michael (the gardener),
Mollie Simpson (gardener), Adell,
Dennis (gardener), Tony
Lawrence (gardener),
Mamie Dillane, and Brian Thorne.

The yams looked like onions, only they were clear.

In 1915, seven Saint Joseph Nuns were at the Nymagee convent. Sister Josephine, Sister Allico and Sister Marcy were the gardeners. The Shamrocks were planted on the side of the Catholic Church, they were planted in the formation to spell out "Our Lady of Victories".

Some of the boarders who were there at the time were:

Nelly Harland (McClafferty)
Kath Dunne (Francisco)
Mable Dunne

Nellie Stanford (Pertzel)
Tossy Lawrence (Hurley)
Brian Dunne

Despite many droughts, invasion of feral animals and the lack of attention, these shamrocks are still there today. They still come and flower each year, although it is hard to distinguish the letters as they have multiplied and spread.

The photo on the right was taken in Nymagee in early 1900. My Grandfather is the fellow on the right. He was born at Frogmore, 1879, died in Kogarah 1958.

My Grandfather's name was Dan Pope, it was also my Great Grandfather's name. Grandfather had a house in Sydney and called it 'Nymagee'. My property at Cowra is also called 'Nymagee'.



Bill Dillon (senior) married Mona Fish from Gilgandra. Mona's father had a bullock team in Gilgandra, his name was Jack Fish. Jack was one of the first men to have a trucking business in Gilgandra. Bill and Mona had six children. Their first baby, a girl, died. Bill is the eldest, then Tom, Gloria, Beverly and Rhonda. Bill Snr. died in 1985, Mona died in 1994 and Bev died in 1995. These are Bill Junior's memories of growing up in Nymagee.

Bill was 8 years old when the family first came to Nymagee. They lived down at the old Chinamen's Garden, this house was behind where the Nymagee town water supply is now.

I went to school at the Court House; this was where the school was held when the old school was condemned. I left school when I was 13 to work in the shearing sheds. The first shed I worked in was Marigold, I didn't get paid any money - just the experience! I got into trouble on the first day because I was reading a book in the 'smoko' break, a book was not allowed on the board. I have worked in most of the sheds in the Nymagee district. I started out as a wool presser - I was only 9 stone! Next I did a lot of rousabouting, then started crutching. Ken McKinnon's was my first shed as a crutcher. I finally became a shearer - my biggest tally was 176 lambs at Nimagee Station. Jack Mackey was shearing with me, we knocked off early at 4.40pm because we had run out of sheep. We both had done 50 each for one run.



Bill Dillon

I have also done a lot of rabbit trapping. I used to earn my pocket money by trapping rabbits. I would carry about 15 rabbit traps on my back, if I caught any I would carry them home in a sugar bag. Later I got a bike and more traps. I thought it was terrific when I got the bike. Dad and I went to Dubbo and got an A-Model 4 utility with solid wheels. This became my means of transport for trapping and going to the sheds.

My family left Nymagee when the price of rabbits dropped from three and six to one and six a pair. My dad trapped rabbits at Bobadah for two and half pence a pair, he thought he was made when the price went up to three pence a pair.

We went to Bourke looking for work, we were there for 3 weeks and it never stopped raining! Dad and Tommy got a job and I came back to Nymagee for a while, then we all went to Temora. Dad got a job managing a property for Walter Ford, the name of the property was Why Chitty. I got a job as a jackeroo about 12

miles from where Dad was. My job was to fill the slow combustion stove with coke and keep the stove clean, water the garden and feed the chooks. I was home sick for the family so the ladies lent me a horse to ride over to visit my family. A bird frightened the horse and the bastard bolted!, we came to a fence and the horse stopped, I got off and led him the rest of the way.

I only stopped at the job for a month, then I went back to where Dad was working. I started to help Dad on the property and Dad asked the boss for some wages for me. The boss refused, so we packed up and left. We went to Toukley where Dad went prawning for a man, we lived at a camping ground in two tents.

I came back to Nymagee when I was about 19 - I had no money. George Pusell lent me some rabbit traps and gave me two pounds credit at their shop. I worked for Frank Carson, who was the butcher in Nymagee. Frank gave me some lessons in killing a sheep and bullocks, he would kill 12 sheep and a bullock each week. One particular day Frank said to me "You and Barney Payton go out to Lowan and kill a bullock". Max Smith lived there at the time, the property is now owned by Stan and Jill Harland. The bullock was very wild, so Max shot it with a 303 rifle, it kicked and rolled until it was in the water! Barney had it by the tail and I was trying to "bleed" it. After the bullock was bled we hooked in to the back of the old ute and dragged it about 500 yards to the closest tree. We needed to pull it up the tree with an endless chain so we could skin it. After a lot of trouble we finally got the job done, we then loaded it on the back of the old ute, wrapped it in a couple of sheets and headed back to the butcher shop - what a day!

I played 5 games of football for the Nymagee Magpies. The funniest game I remember was when the 'old boys' from Hermidale played the 'old boys' from Nymagee, each team was allowed to let two kids play. Pat Slater and I were the two kids who played with Nymagee. Jack Conley from Nymagee was the referee. Pat was a big kid for his age and he scored a couple of tries. I dropped the ball over the line but didn't ground it, the ref gave me the try. After that, I followed Pat, he got tackled about a yard from the line, I said "Get up quick Pat and play the ball". I grabbed the ball, reached over the line and scored another try! These were the only 2 tries I scored in my football career.

I also played football against Bobadah, Hermidale, Nyngan and Cobar. In one particular game against Cobar, Kevin Miskell ran into me knocked me 'ace over head', Kevin Miskell was taken off on a stretcher.

I also played tennis for Nymagee. I also played in a lot of tournaments around the district. I thought I was a pretty good player. Once I played in a tournament in Condobolin, it was a 3 day tournament. I got to the Semi Final, where I played a fellow for so long in the last set everyone else had gone home. Next day I arrived at the courts for my first game, it was against a young kid from Sydney about 12 or 13, I said to myself this game will be easy. He really thrashed the shit out of me beating me 6.0. The next day he beat the gun player from Condobolin, the gun player threw the racket at the fence in disgust.

John Collins and myself won many tournaments, the best win we had was against Brian Kelly and Ian Lorimer at Vermont Hill. The two best tennis players I ever saw at Nymagee were Dick Collins and Renny Fennamore, the best lady player I can remember was Kate Ede. My best cricket score for Nymagee was with the Ausminders, this was the Nymagee Mine team. I made 94 runs. I was wicket keeper for Nymagee for years. I was a very versatile player, some times the opening bat also number 10.

I was about 12 when we came to Fords Hut in the Bobadah area. We went there trapping rabbits. Clive Ede had a rabbit run; he would call around the different properties picking up the rabbits off the trappers.

We did not have much food, only tinned meat. One brand tasted like a pepper tree, I couldn't eat it.

We trapped there for about 3 months until it started to get very dry. Someone told us that the rabbits were watering and to fence a tank in. Dad made me sit on the roof of Fords Hut to count the rabbits that were coming into the tank for a drink.

Dad decided as they were watering we would fence in three tanks. We did not know anything about 'tanking' rabbits. We learnt the hard way! We put the netting around the tanks with a 'V' and funnels, but we had them too far from the water. A rabbit would come in, have a drink, turn around and come out the funnel.

Someone told us to put the funnels about a rabbit's length from the water, so when he turned around he missed the end of the funnel, once he did that he was caught! The three tanks came good all at the same time. I remember one night there were so many rabbits in one of the fenced in tanks that they piled up in the corner of the yard we had made (a 3'6" netting fence). They piled on top of each other, hundreds of them died.

My three sisters and Mum were cracking their necks. My brothers, Dad and I were gutting, pairing and hanging them on a fence. We worked from 8 o'clock at night until 8 o'clock the next morning.

Dad had a horse and rubber tyred sulky to go around the tanks. At one particular tank he would get about 7 pairs of black rabbits - this was an indication that rabbits were in plaque proportions. One day we had 500 pairs (1,000 rabbits) hanging on four fences, and Clive Ede, the rabbit collector, was about an hour late. Us kids had to keep the flies off the rabbits. We had bushes, and we would run along the rows of rabbits swishing away the flies.

After we made our 'fortune' out of the rabbits, Dad went to town to buy us a vehicle. He came home with a dodge 6 car, it had a canvas hood and big mudguards - us kids were real disappointed.

We then went to Nymagee to live at the chinaman's garden, where two big fig trees grew. They were supposed to be the biggest in the southern Hemisphere.

Mum would send me to the shop, but instead of doing the shopping I would go over to Hamilton's and ride the goats. Ivor and Zillah Hamilton had billy carts with goats pulling them. Many a flogging I got for not being home on time and for being at the Hamiltons riding goats.

One of the old timers I remember around Nymagee was Victor Clark. He was a great punter, he had a great memory of the Melbourne Cup winners. He could go back 30 years and tell you who won the cup in any year. He was a rabbit trapper and always a gentleman.

My mum always liked to have a bet on the horses, she would bet 6 pence or one shilling each way. I would take the bet down to Dick McLean's shop where his wife would take the bets.

Uncle Frank Fuller used to tell me how they would ride their pushbikes from Nymagee to Canbelego on a Saturday. They would play football on Saturday, dance Saturday night, play football again on Sunday then ride home to Nymagee. If they won they would all ride home together, but if they lost they would ride in 'dribs and drabs'. The trip to Canbelego was 40 miles each way!!!

Another of Uncle Frank's stories was back in his younger days when bike riding in Nymagee was a great sport. He said that Cock fighting was also held in the Nymagee area.

Uncle Frank used to say that Ernie Mackey was the best woodcutter around. The woodcutters for the Nymagee mine would meet at Kerrins Tank, sometimes there would be 100 drays waiting to be loaded with wood. Uncle Frank said that Arthur Werner was also a good woodcutter, he could cut enough wood for three drays.

Uncle Frank Fuller was one of the greatest people I have ever known. Old Bill Morris used to come from Condobolin, via Bobadah to Nymagee. He would spend a few months at a time in Nymagee. After a long dry spell, we were at the Nymagee Hotel and it started to rain. Bill went outside and put his hand out and caught a few drops of rain. He smelt it and said, "This rain is from South Australia". He had a saying that 'if it rains in Wilcannia it will rain in Nymagee'.

Another character was Arthur McClay, who had a lot of dogs. He always got up at 4 in the morning to take his dogs for a walk and get a goat. One particular morning he had a young pup with him, and I happened to be in the toilet. My wife Colleen came up to the toilet saying "Quick, quick, how much longer are you going to be? I said "Go around the back", which she did. Next thing she felt this cold thing licking her 'you know what'. It was Arthur's young pup, with Arthur close behind!! She took off like a bolt of lightening, back into the house.

My father always said that if you don't tell the truth, may a bolt of lightening in the next thunderstorm strike you dead. If my stories are not all true may I be struck with a bolt of lightening in the next thunderstorm.

Collins Family

The Collins Family can be traced back as far as 1816 when John Collins was born in County Down Ireland. He and his wife, Jane, arrived in Australia in October 1841. He purchased land in the Gosling Creek/Springside area just out of Orange. John Collins owned the 'Springside Inn' which still stands today and generations of the Collins family came from this district.

One of John's daughters, Margaret, married James Dalton, a wealthy Irishman who owned a lot of land around Orange, including 'Duntryleague', one of the choicest pieces of agricultural land in the Orange district. The Dalton home today is the Duntryleague Golf Club. My father said when you went to see the Daltons you were met by a butler at the front door.

The Daltons also owned 'Balowra' Station near Nymagee, which they purchased around 1904, and 'Gobabla' near Nevertire. Being related to the Daltons was as close as the Collins family ever came to wealth!

Daniel Paul Collins 1878-1965 was a grandson of John Collins and he also grew up in the 'Springside' area. About 1902 he purchased or built a house at 74 Sampson Street in Orange and called it 'Springside' as well. My father, Richard John was born in this house in 1915.

About 1914 my Grandfather, Daniel Paul Collins, was employed as Manager of Balowra by the Dalton Family. It was here that my father and his brothers and sisters grew up and lived until the Second World War.

In my father's family there was: Pauline (1912-1978), Margaret (1914-1915), Richard (1915-1966), Augustus (1917-1964), Edward (1918-1979), Daniel (1920-1977), and Gerald (1924-1980).

The years that the Collins family grew up on Balowra were the years of the great rabbit plagues. It seems as if it was almost a full time job exterminating rabbits. There was the poisoning of tanks, rabbit drives, trapping, shooting and pit traps all along the netting fence boundaries. With so many rabbits about it is no wonder the country was in drought much of the time.

Photos taken all through the 1920's and 1930's show paddocks devoid of grass and trees. There must have been a wet year in the early 1920's and plenty of grass in 1923 when there was supposed to have been a fire which burnt from the Darling to the Bogan Rivers and beyond. My father said they could see the fire coming for weeks but were unable to fight it like they can today. Photos taken in 1924 show Balowra with no grass and burnt black trees as a stark reminder of the ferocity of the fires.

Although life in the 1930's must have been hard, it seems as if the people of that era really knew how to enjoy themselves. Tennis was a great social game and everyone played. Balowra had four tennis courts which were built by Daniel Paul

in the 1920's. On one occasion during the 1930's, over 300 people turned up to play tennis at Balowra. Daniel devised a set of rules which gave players the opportunity to play more than one set. Until then, if you lost your first game then you were out of it. The 'Balowra' rules became the accepted rules governing tennis in the area. Even in the 1960's in Cobar, tennis tournaments were advertised as playing under Balowra rules.

My father held the position of overseer on Balowra, leading up to the outbreak of war. He joined the Army in 1941 and trained at an army base in Sydney. Apparently he was the first to join up from the Nymagee district. He claimed that when they all lined up the first day, they were asked, 'who could fire a gun?' My father put his hand up and straight away he was singled out to lead a group as he was the only person to put his hand up. He ended up as Sergeant! He was badly injured in a training exercise that went wrong, the day before they were scheduled to go to Malaya. He said when he woke up next day, all his mates, his clothes and pay had gone to Malaya. He was discharged as medically unfit because of the accident. His bad back dogged him all his life. After he recovered from his accident he took over the position of Post Master at the Nymagee Post Office from Jack Grady, a position he held for fourteen years.

About 1943, the Collins Boys purchased Balowra from the Daltons for a cheap price. The lease had just about run out and the Daltons knew they would probably not be able to renew it. The Collins Boys also knew the risk but took the chance.

After the War, Balowra was scheduled to be cut-up for soldiers' settlements, along with a number of other properties in the area. It was eventually reduced in size despite three of the Collins Boys having served in the New Guinea Campaign and were returned soldiers themselves!

Originally Balowra was about 66,000 acres in size and it was just about split in half, it was not big enough to support all the boys so they all went their different ways. My father was Post Master, Danny took up shearing, Gus left for Orange and Gerald and Ted stayed and worked on Balowra.

During the fourteen years my father was Post Master in Nymagee, he was never entirely happy and always looked to the day when he could get a place of his own. If he wasn't away playing tennis or cricket, he spent most of his spare time shooting rabbits to help get some money together. He also spent much of his spare time at weekends cutting the locals' hair - he was the local barber!

During the wool boom of the early 1950's he was picking up dead wool on 'Wongawood', near Mount Hope, to make a few extra dollars. His brother-in-law Pat Nicholson owned Wongawood at the time and lost a thousand full-wool wethers from anthrax. My father wasn't too proud to pick it all up; he had eleven bales of dead wool which he picked up over a couple of weekends. He sold it right in the middle of the boom and was paid 110 pence a pound for it (240 cents per kilogram), an incredible price for any wool, let alone dead wool.

It was while he was collecting this dead wool that he killed the 'big snake' - maybe the biggest ever found in the district. According to my father he was shaking some dead wool from a carcass, when all of a sudden here was this great snake beside him. He claimed he got such a shock he jumped ten feet in the air and when he came down he had a rock in his hand which he belted the snake with. He didn't think anyone would believe his story of how big it was so he bought it home with him. I was only about four years old at the time, but I can still remember it clearly. My father laid it out and it measured 10 feet 11 inches (3.32 metres) in length with its head missing and weighed 46 pounds (20.86 kilograms).

Boy! did that snake do the rounds. Everybody for miles came to see it, my father kept dragging it out again and again. It was dragged around the streets, through the pub, to the shops and back to the Post Office. But eventually it started to get a bit on the nose as all dead snakes tend to do and my mother ordered it out!

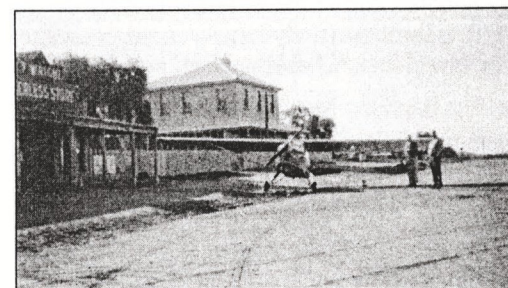
My father often wondered what sort of snake it was and how it got to where it was. It was black in colour and he found it in the "Dairy" paddock on Wongawood. He said he saw one like it in a show some years later and was told it was a "Rock Python". Apparently there were one or two other reports of big snakes in that area but how they got there is a mystery and as far as I know there haven't been any similar reports for many years.

To the best of my knowledge it's the biggest snake I've heard of in the Nymagee-Cobar area. I've seen a few King Browns that have measured up to seven and a half feet (2.23 meters) and heard stories of King Browns reaching eight to eight and a half feet but I've never seen proof of it or photos etc.

A dead snake can be stretched out a bit after its been dead for a day or two and it makes it look longer than it really is!

During the 1950's my father claimed that he was asked to do a rough survey and measure the big hill at the back of Nymagee known as the "Baldi". Apparently it was the best place in Western NSW for an observatory. As Nymagee had no power and water at the time, (about 1953 I think), Nymagee was passed over and the observatory was eventually built in Parkes about 1960 - the famous "Dish".

The Flying Doctor used to come from Forbes and land in the main street of Nymagee. I was actually delivered by the Flying Doctor in Forbes by a Doctor Young. He flew out to Nymagee picked my mother up and took her back to Forbes, where I was born, and flew us both back home to Nymagee again. He continued to land in the main street for some years after.



Royal Flying Doctor Service 1950

My father still never had a car when I was born, he bought one not long after. Petrol rations were still on so he bought a little Morris Minor with a canvas canopy.

There were a lot of rabbits around Nymagee during the 1950's and there were always one or two chillers around town (type of coolroom). There was a lot of rabbiters around, I can remember two on Balowra at the same time. I doubt if anyone takes rabbits these days.

I will try and remember all the people and where they lived from my time in Nymagee. I was only 9 years old when we left Nymagee so my memory may not be perfect.

My family lived in the Post Office and there were no houses east of the Post Office where there are houses today. My Uncle Ted Collins built a house not far from the Post Office in 1962. The Police Station was next and the first policeman I remember would probably be Neil Campbell, he was the only one I can remember before Merv Baldwin came in the early 1960's. Ken McKinnon lived up behind that, he owned "Kenmure". Just after I left school, about 1961/62, Ken took over as publican of the Metropolitan Hotel for a short time; maybe one or two years.

Mrs Mahy and Frank Mahy lived almost opposite the Post Office in an old house that was replaced by a new one in the early 1960's. Heading west from Mahys there was the butcher shop which I think was run by Frank Carson at one time and George Pusell later. My grandfather, William Nicholson, used to do some work there from time to time.

The Carson family lived in an old house next to the butcher shop. Next to them, in the same old building complex, lived the Dillon Family. The Payton family had a shop in the old building that ran down towards the corner. I remember the excitement when ice-cream came to Nymagee on the odd occasion, everyone in town gathered there to get ice-cream before it started to melt. It had to be eaten quickly because there was no way to keep it frozen. Most of the time that old long building was uninhabited.

Down near the corner was the remains of an old hotel and a billiard room. On the opposite corner Mr. & Mrs. Bill Addison built a shop sometime in the late 1950's. The Ware family lived just south of Addison's shop. Further west there was Pusells and the old bank building, next Jacky Little lived.

The Hamilton Family lived in the old shop at the far end of Graham Street and the Motts lived in the fibro house next to that. Lance Mott used to drive a truck and he was burnt to death while he was trying to repair a broken fuel line. Mrs. Mott was a Higgins from Cobar. I was good friends with Bruce and then there was a girl called Penny.

Coming back towards the pub was the old Hall and I well remember the day it burnt down in 1954 or 1955. Buddy Williams had performed there the night before and everybody from miles around came to see him. The Hall went up about lunch time I think, next day and there was nothing anybody could do about it.

It wasn't long before a new hall was built on the site of the old one. I remember Bill Hodge, Jack Conley and Bill "Banjo" Patterson, just to name a few who worked on it. On the night it opened, Frank Bourke and the "White Rose Orchestra" played - it was a big night.

Tom Dunne told me he was selling raffle tickets on the night of the ball, they were probably two shillings (20 cents) each and an old bloke by the name of Steve Kenny bought £50 worth, or the equivalent of \$100.00 worth of tickets - it would have been more than a week's wages in 1955!

There is a story to that as well. Steve Kenny was an old character who lived around Nymagee; one of those old blokes who didn't appear to have any family, no home of his own and just lived on his own with his dog. He used to go on the occasional 'binge' and when he was short of money he would borrow off my father at the Post Office or send a telegram asking for money. Sometimes he would get my father to go half shares in a lottery ticket with him.

One day he came to the Post Office and wanted my father to go in with him and buy a lottery ticket, but my father was busy and talked my mother into it - they won second prize in the State Lottery - £2,000 (\$4,000), a lot of money in those days. My father said: "Steve it won't last you six months!" But Steve said he would spend it wisely and would hang onto it. Blowing £50 on raffle tickets was Steve's way of spending wisely.

After five months he came back to Dad and said: "You said I would be broke in six months Dick (everyone called my father Dick), but you were wrong, it only took me five!"

After the Hall came the Metropolitan Hotel and it hasn't changed much in my time. The old pub burnt down in 1930 my father told me, it was of similar vintage to the old hall.

I can't remember who used to live in the house on the corner heading north of the Pub. Bill and Colleen Dillon lived there years later and then the Curtis Family after that. Apparently there was an old bake house where the Wright family ran a bakery for years and also had pictures there.

The Mackey family lived in the house now owned by Ivor Hamilton next to the school residence. I can remember when that school was built; it was in 1953 I think.

When I first went to school in 1951 or 1952, school was in the Court House at the Police Station and the teacher was Billy Knight. From there we went up to the old convent for a time and then into the Catholic Church for a short period while they were building the new school and finally into the new school sometime in 1953.

I claim the dubious honour, with Terry Hay of being the first student in the new school to get the 'cuts'. a flogging with a feather duster behind the door. Don Hyde

was teaching in Nymagee for a time and then he went away to do national service and then returned. I'm not sure whether it was Don who gave us the cuts or another teacher who was there while Don was doing national service. Either way I'm sure we deserved it!

In 1955 my Uncle Gerald suffered a horrendous accident when he had his leg badly cut with a hargan saw. He almost died from a blood clot as a result and was never able to do manual work after that. It was then that my father bought all the other boys out and we left Nymagee and went back to Balowra.



Nymagee Court House

1956 was one of the wettest years ever, it was very difficult getting about. Vehicles were bogged for months and you couldn't get near them. We had a Morris Oxford at the time and when we left for Nymagee we would take a bag to put over the radiator and a hose to drain the water out. Crow's Creek just out of Nymagee was running the whole time we were home throughout the May holidays. I think Balowra measured over 40 inches of rain that year.

That was followed in the next two years by bushfires and a water drought. When the bushfires of 1958 were raging in the south-west, we could see the massive glow at night; my father spent days fighting it, like everyone else in the district.

After leaving school in 1961 I got to enjoy life of living on the land near Nymagee during the 1960's. There was tennis during the winter months and cricket during the summer. Nymagee had two tennis teams at one stage, Nymagee and The Peak and we used to play against all the Cobar teams: RSL, Golf Club, Raheens, out in the bush at Kerrigundi and Helms Tank and Canbelego. The Peak won the Cobar competition in either 1966 or 1967. We played in the finals on a number of occasions.

Nymagee also had two cricket teams in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Nymagee actually played football a couple of times during the mid 1960's, a couple of games against Hermidale and Bobadah. The ground we played on was on the northern side to the water supply next to the road.

Carpet bowls were also popular in Nymagee for a time. In the hall of a Saturday night there would be up to thirty people competing.

Rifle shooting was another pastime. Ron Warner and Alec Story got it going and it was very popular during the 1960's. The rifle range was at the bottom of the

Sugarloaf Hill a couple of miles to the northeast of town.

When I first left school, Bob Marriot was leaching copper at the old Nymagee mines. He had been fossicking in the area for years, mining was his life.

Then there was a lot of activity at the mine during 1966 when up to thirty men were working at one stage. They found the old shaft which had closed down in 1917 and opened it up again. Bill Davis from "Glenowen" Station was apparently working at the time when it closed down in 1917 and his advice was sought as to where the original shaft was to be located. The story went that 'Pop' Burgess burnt the old headframe down when the mine closed to get the nuts and bolts from it. They repaired all the wooden linings and pumped all the water out - it took eighteen months to pump it all out! Then they just kept maintaining it, pumping the water out. I don't think it ever produced a kilogram of copper in the six or seven years that it operated. Billy Collins, my brother, actually worked there for a time and I got to go down a couple of times. It was 800 feet deep and it was interesting walking along the same old wooden drives that were worked over 80 years before. The copper in the water preserved the timber structures. The mine closed down again about 1973 and has never reopened.

In the late 1970's a princess competition was held in Cobar to earn some money to help build the Lilliane Brady Village. Nymagee sponsored a princess, Angela Campbell, the daughter of the local policeman, Greg Campbell and his wife Margaret Greg and the publican, Merv Taylor, took on the job of raising money. They tried everything they could think of: They held a Rodeo at Gilgunia and a Golf Tournament in Nymagee just to name two unusual events, and a beer bottle drive where they came up with 36,000 beer bottles. A cartoon of this unusual happening was featured on the front page of the *Daily Telegraph*. Angela Campbell and the good folk of Nymagee raised the most money and Angela was declared the winner, raising over \$4,000.

Then there was the Army coming to Nymagee about 1978/79. There was about 300 army personnel camped down at the Gymkhana Ground. While they were here a dance and a sports-day were held to earn money for the Lilliane Brady Village. John Shaw, a kangaroo shooter, organised the day and it was a great success.

In October 1979 Nymagee celebrated it's centenary. It was held over the October long weekend and was a wonderful three days. It rained the first day, Friday the 26th and the outcome of the whole weekend looked to be in doubt, but Saturday was as clear as a bell. There was a huge crowd for the gymkhana and the rain cleared all the dust away. Before the event dust was looming as the biggest problem. The entire weekend was a complete success. A small publication recalling the town's history was published to commemorate the event. The Nymagee Centenary of 1979 was the biggest celebration that I can ever remember being celebrated in the Nymagee district.

There were a lot of old characters around Nymagee at the time. I don't know

whether they were ever married but they all appeared to be bachelors who lived on their own with a dog or two. They were a bit scruffy at times but maintained a certain dignity.

There was Dick Bramston, Victor Clarke, Bill West and Bill Morris just to name four of them. When we were kids Dick Bramston seemed a kindly old man who often gave us pennies to spend. Bill Morris used to spend his time between Nymagee and Condobolin; he drove an old Ford (I think) truck and it would take him about three days to travel from Condobolin to Nymagee. In the middle of summer, with about four hours of sunlight left he would set up camp at the "six mile" creeks on the Bobadah Road, less than 40 kilometres from Nymagee! Bill was never in a hurry. He would talk about the weather all day, he used to say "South Australia rain was no good".

Balowra was shearing one year and Bill was employed as a piece-picker. The shearing had 'cut-out' and all the shearers were at the huts getting ready to leave when it started to rain. They had a heavy storm which brought the creek down. In those days the huts at Balowra were on the eastern side of the creek. With the creek running a banker and the whole team stranded and unable to leave, Bill went over to the edge of the torrent, scooped up a hand-full of water and announced to the rest of the team that: "it was South Australian rain and no bloody good". According to my father Bill made a lot of money in his young days and owned property in Sydney, he said he could carry a hundred rabbit traps on his shoulders.

When the "Kenmure Place" units were opened in 1967 a number of these old guys moved in next to one another. Some of them were unable to come to grips with modern technology such as electricity. It took them a while to get used to electric toasters, heaters and the wireless, not to mention television.

Both Dick Bramston and Victor Clarke liked to be the first up in the morning. They would be up and about with the billy boiled about 4.00 am. Now that they were living side-by-side it was a competition to see who got up first. They started getting up earlier and earlier and eventually leaving their lights on all night to give the impression they were up!

"The Story of the Dray that Was" — Thelma Wade

My Dad had a horse and dray for work on the main roads. One weekend Dad and older brother Keith went out and collected a load of charcoal. On returning home Keith was left with the job of unloading, which he did not do.

The next morning we were all woken up with a roar from Dad ... a spark from the charcoal burnt the dray overnight and all that was left were the iron rims and a few bits and pieces.

Nance Fennamore

When part of the 'Overflow' Station was thrown open for ballot in the early 1920's George Fennamore from Mendooran drew a block allocated for soldier settlement.

In 1926 he brought his wife, Mary, and family, Edna, Pat and Ida to take up permanent residence at the property he named 'Orange Grove'. Two sons, Ray and Wren, were born later.

The family's education was all obtained through the Correspondence School, lessons being posted from Sydney weekly.

Communications were very poor in this area in those days with no formed roads, no telephones and mail only being transported from Nymagee once a week by horse and sulky. As years went on the mail increased to two mails weekly taken by motor vehicle.

In 1928 (or 29) neighbours Frank Weston, Reg and Os Machin, Dave Lorrimer, Keith McDonald, Arthur Tindall and George Fennamore worked together to construct a telephone line which connected all their properties to the Nymagee Exchange. It was known as the 15 party line with each property having its own code letter. 'Orange Grove' was 15B.

As the family grew up they became keen tennis and cricket players and attended many sporting and social events in Nymagee. They all worked in the district. Pat joined the RAAF in 1942 and returned home to work on 'Orange Grove' and as a shearar. He was one of the guests at the Nymagee Welcome Home for returned men and women. His name is on the Nymagee Honour Roll. He married in 1948 and he and his wife, Nance, and daughter, Lynnette, moved to live on their property 'Elaine' in 1950. Geoffrey and Maree were born later.

Ray bought and lived on 'Allan Doone' and Wren bought 'Pangee'.

Edna and Ida married and moved to other towns with their families.

George died in 1957 and gradually the family moved away.

Mary retired to Dubbo and died there in 1989.

Pat, Nance and family stayed and continued to take part in sport and other activities in the district. Pat was one of the four original "Peak Tennis Club" players, with Jasper Bridle, Molly Collins and Jill Rountree



Pat Fennamore, Molly Collins, Jill Rountree, Jaspa Bridle
Switching on the lights Nymagee Tennis Courts 1977

to man the court for the switching on of the lights at Nymagee tennis courts in 1977.

Lynette and Maree married and moved from the Hermidale, Nymagee district.

Pat died in 1996, which left only Nance, Geoff and his wife, Lynn, and their children, Clinton and Selina, the only Fennamores remaining in the Nymagee district.

Clint and Selina attended Nymagee School for their primary education and participated in all sport, Selina running for her school at State level, Lynn and Geoff taking active part in P & C and School Council.

Nance still remains an active CWA member.

Doug Osborne's Memories of The Nymagee Gun Club

The gun club held their events about one mile east of the village of Nymagee. On an average there would be about 25 shooters attend the full day shoot. The first committee was Ken McKinnon and Bill Addison.

Some of the shooters I remember were: Alec Story, Ron Keary, Ronnie Warner, Frank Carson, Jack Conley, Teddy Collins, Bill Rooney, George Pusell, Ernie Mackey, Jack Mackey, Peter Kershaw, Sonny Carson, Bill Osborne (my father) and myself.

One of my greatest memories of the Nymagee Gun Club was the day, at the age of only 17, I shot my straight 100 clays. Barry Hay (of Nymagee) was in the 'trap' that day. Following is a letter I received from George Biggs of Hartley Limited congratulating me on this achievement:

Dear Doug

Our Association Secretary, Mr McCullough, has advised me that you were recently successful in shooting 111 straight at Clays.

On behalf of this firm and myself, please accept our heartiest congratulations on being the 6th person to shoot 100 straight in Australia.

Enclosed you will find our special Hartley Break Badge in recognition.

Once again, best of luck with your future shooting.

Yours faithfully

*Harley Limited
George Biggs
22/8/1952*



John Simmons Shearing Season at 'The Peak'

In was approximately mid-1978 and a full roar Grazcos team of shearers had arrived at the famous Nymagee Station named 'The Peak' ready for the annual general shearing for owners Barry and Dolly Betts. We appeared to have at least three weeks to a month to complete the shearing.

First morning and everyone was organised to the shed for a nice early start. And start we did, with the men busy going about their normal duties and the shed with a constant hum of experience.

All was going well until later in the week the rain hit, putting shearing off for a few days. No one minded as it gave us all a well earned break. It gave me, as the young overseer, a chance to catch up on bookkeeping and tallies plus giving me a chance to catch up with Barry, who was a fine chap.

The following week came quickly, shearing commenced again with dry sheep until more showers. Our shearing team had obviously run into a wet time at 'The Peak'. The stop-start manner of the shed, plus being so far out of town, had caused the shearers to become toey. Consequently, when shearing resumed the tempers flared. One shearer in particular, named Colin, started belting sheep around. Barry had witnessed the abuse to the sheep and asked could I mention to Colin to give the injured sheep a break from his abuse. Colin and I had previously had words in an unfavourable manner about his behaviour on the grog. Of course, I was just some young upstart, only 21 or 22, that bothered him to no end.

As Colin was harming the sheep I strolled down the board in an uneasy fashion, knowing my age held its own status in the shed. Yet it was up to my title as the 'Overseer' to let him know that we wanted the sheep to be shorn alive, not dead. When I let Colin know that, I also slipped in if he thought he was so much better than me then he could step outside. I thought to myself, 'That should do it'. To my surprise Colin instantly threw down his hand piece, and fled outside. My threat had grown into something I hadn't bargained on! With the rest of the shearing team seeing this and looking for the next bit of action, I followed him out where I met him with his dukes up! Well, after a couple of blows from Colin, my nose which had previously been broken was split again and had blood streaming from it. So I went into survival mode and managed to wrestle Colin to the ground. After much scuffling and rolling I stood over him. Through the blood gushing out of my nose I threatened him a last time, 'Go to buggery and get your brass somewhere else because I'm not paying you.'

Covered in my blood Colin staggered inside and packed up. The busy shearers could only see one bloody figure as they hardly dared to look up. Meanwhile, I had a wash and cleaned myself up then headed into the shed as if nothing had happened. The shearing team thought Colin had got a hell of a hiding and unbeknown to the fact that he was covered in my blood. My job became instantly easier as a result of one bloody encounter. I had no more problems as overseer due to my newly acquired false reputation.

'The Peak' Woolshed will live long in my memories because of this experience.

Sqwark Barton - "Snake Gully", Nymagee

In the 1870's - 1880's three of my Great Great Great Uncles were involved in the Nymagee mine and town.

RUSSELL BARTON (1830 - 1916)

Russell, a squatter, woollscourer and part owner in the Great Cobar mine bought the mining rights from Henry Manly to the Nymagee ore lode in 1879 and floated a public company to develop it.

In 1880 he built a large residence near Five Dock and called it Russell Lea. The suburb of Russell Lea is named after it. As so Barton Avenue, Russell Street, Mooculta Street (a Bourke property he owned for years), Lea Avenue, Russell Park, Barton Street in Cobar and Nymagee are also named after him.

He became an M.L.A. for the Bourke area in 1880 and retired from politics in 1886 due to ill health.

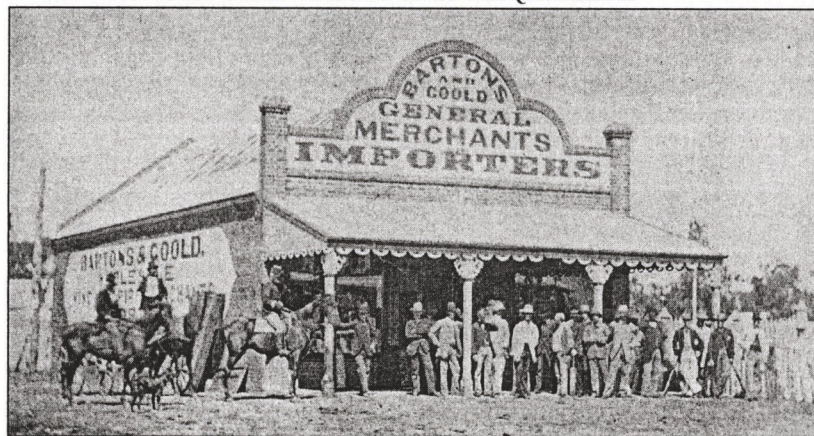
WICKSTEAD BARTON (1839 - 1918)

A squatter and woollscourer from the Upper Paroo. He came to Nymagee to assist in the running of the mine for his brother, Russell. Twins, Max Dumas and Berl Dumas were born in Nymagee in 1887. He probably left after 1889 due to closure of the mine.

GRANGER BARTON (1848 - 1911)

A woollscourer from Bourke area. Granger operated a general store in Cobar with Pierce Gould. He later traded in Nymagee as Barton & Gould in the late 1870 - 1900's. In the first sub-division of land in Nymagee, Grainger owned the 40 acres of land from Graham Street to the Priory Road.

He later formed Perolia Boring Co. in Bourke in the late 1880's and sunk artesian bores in the Bourke area and south west Queensland.



Barton's Store, approximately 1902

RUSSELL BARTON

List of his accidents during 60 years

- 1830 The first serious accident - I was born.
- 1837 Fell into the River Lea. Then got out, it took one hour to bring me round and back to life.
- 1837 Fell off a bookcase at school and broke my arm.
- 1840 Bathing jumped into the Torrens River, S.A. feet first and staked myself in the groin, 3 weeks confined to bed. Six months (later) it broke out again, laid up for twelve weeks.
- 1840 Badly bitten by bulldog. Arms and chest.
- 1840 Was with a young girl when she broke her leg eight miles from any assistance - ran 3 miles to inform her mate, back again and carried her until exhausted, lit a fire and camped. Being very much done up went to sleep and burned my hand badly. Returned home ill.
- 1842 Fell over rocks on the Raparinga River, hurt leg and side badly, laid up about two weeks.
- 1843 Was kicked in the chest by a cow, badly bruising muscles and dividing bone - laid up two weeks.
- 1844 Struck heavily on chest with bullock yolk (sic), dividing bone again. Have suffered through life from this.
- 1845 Speared by Blacks crossing the Anna branch (Darling River) - laid up about one month.
- 1845 Horned by a bullock in the muscles of the arm - laid up about a week.
- 1846 Horse accident - tore muscles of leg badly and about two weeks before I could get about.
- 1847 Cut ankle badly with adze. Was 20 days on crutches.
- 1848 Stabbed left hand badly with sheep shears. Brysipilas (erysipelas) set in, laid up some weeks - have suffered from effects for 20 years.
- 1849 Was stabbed in mouth by a Negro
- 1850 Strained and ruptured muscles of chest in match wrestling with a coast champion.
- 1851 Fell down a shaft on diggings - badly bruised - laid up one week.
- 1851 On board the Black Bagle when she took fire, badly scalded with steam in saving the vessel.
- 1852 Wrecked twice in the Australasian Packet. Captain and owners Price Bros. 90 Mile Beach. Cecilia schooner - Melbourne Heads.
- 1853 Jumping paling fence, tripped and fell heavily on a large boulder - hurt loins - badly laid up some time.
- 1855 Cut leg badly with axe and was married.

- 1856 Cutting down a bullock when rope broke letting bullock fall on top of me. Drove knife through muscles of arm, wife and self stitched it up.
- 1856 Struck by lightening but although knocked down, not seriously injured.
- 1859 House burned down - everything destroyed. Slightly burned in saving wife and children.
- 1863 Yarding scrub cattle "Talía Port Lincoln" (Talía - a small village near Port Lincoln) horse fell heavily on one leg, crushing it badly - laid up for some time.
- 1865 Jumped into Darling River to save W. Johnson, both nearly drowned. Taken out insensible. Moral, never do it again.
- 1866 When drafting sheep a ram butted me on the chest stopping the action of the heart - this was most interesting for while he whole body seemed paralysed, the brain seemed perfectly clear and I knew that unless - like a watch - the machinery started again within a few seconds it would stop forever - the shock of falling and being caught by the men was sufficient and I escaped.
- 1866 Horse turned a complete somersault with me crushing my foot badly - was seven weeks on crutches.
- 1867 A tree fell on me dislocating my ankle and crushing a finger - about six weeks on crutches again. Never have been able to dance since.
- 1867 While endeavouring to catch a horse, she reared and struck me on the throat with her forefeet, could take nothing but a little liquid for a week.
- 1873 A man bailed my up at Timberylongi, had nothing to protect myself, struck him heavily on the head nearly killing him but broke my right hand, arm in sling for some weeks.
- 1888 Driving at night was thrown out of buggy on to my head and neck. Very severely bruised and strained. Insensible for about an hour.
- 1889 Planks slipped going on board a steamer, fell heavily on back. Under doctor for nearly three months.
- 1902 Stepped off tram in motion and ruptured muscles of left knee. Very lame. Doctors say will never be strong again.
- 1903 Thrown off cast iron roller on to fence - seriously hurt ribs, spleen, the lower lining and very ill for months.

"We're not sure if this man was extremely accident prone - or just plain unlucky"
He was obviously made of tough stuff - as were most of our pioneers.

Alice Bridle (Stanford)

I was born in Nymagee in 1913. Mrs Hurst was the midwife that delivered me. When I was six weeks old I had whooping cough. I was carried around on a pillow for about six months, this was because I was so delicate. I was fed with a bit of my mother's milk and a tablespoon of castor oil each day.

I went to the school at the convent, Sisters Hillary and Margaret are two of the nuns I remember. There would have been about eight nuns.

We lived at the Government Tank. My brother Bill rented the Government Tank, so that is how we came to live there. Each Sunday families would come to fish at the tank, and about 3 o'clock we would have a party. We would cook crayfish that had been caught that day.

We used to milk cows. The milk would be boiled in a stew pan, when it was cold the cream would be skimmed off the top and that would be eaten with bread and jam.

I remember an old man who rode a pushbike, he had an old broom and a blue cattle dog. He would play music on the old broom, like a violin. He used to exchange books with my mother. One day he arrived and he and Mum sat out under the pepper tree. He said to Mum, 'Mrs Stanford, this book is a bit smutty in the middle.'

I was about 7 when my father died (Bill Stanford), we went to live at Balladoran then. We had four horses and four drays, these had our belongings packed on them. I never thought my mother could drive a buggy and pair - but she had to, so we could get to Balladoran. It took us six weeks to go from Nymagee to Balladoran.



Jaspa and Alice Bridle's Wedding
Bridesmaid: Ethel Werner, Groomsman: Bill Stanford
Page Boy: Eric Luton, Flower Girls: McLean Girls

We lived there for about two years, then came back to Nymagee. We took our chooks and cattle with us. One old spotted cow had a calf on the road, the calf was picked up and put in a netting cage under the dray (this cage under the dray was meant for our chooks).

My sister, Nellie, was about 10 and I was 7 when we started to work in the house. My mother had a stroke and my father had cancer, so us girls had to cook and look after four men (our three brothers and father).

The men were sleeper cutters for the railway. They carted sleepers by dray into the railway at Balladoran.

I married Jaspa Bridle on 29 February, 1936 in Nymagee. Mrs Norton made our wedding cake. The reception was in the Nymagee Hall, we were married in the Catholic Church. My brother Bill gave me away, and I remember that he had a 'bunged up' eye because a bee had stung him the day before.

Jaspa worked as a 'ring barker'. Jaspa, Ron Warner and Arty Luton came from Tumut to Nymagee. The three of them got a contract to 'ring bark' at the Overflow. When 'ring barking' cut out they went fencing. Later on, Jaspa became a shearer, his first shed was at Charlie Read's place 'The Pines'. He used to shear with the blades. Charlie wanted some rams shorn with the blades, this started Jaspa off as a shearer.

I went cooking for the shearers and Jaspa was the contractor. I cooked for three sheds to start off with - Weston, Wiggins and Betts. I had no stove to cook in. An old man who was a roustabout in the shed, cooked the meat and vegies in a camp oven. He also cooked the dampers for me.

Jaspa and I went to Cooma for a while, he was contracting there with his Auntie and Uncle. He always shored in a grey flannel shirt, this was what most shearers wore. While we were there we had a real 'fly wave'. They even 'blew' the flannel shirts because they were damp and smelt of sheep and wool. We shored down there for about six weeks. I did the cooking.

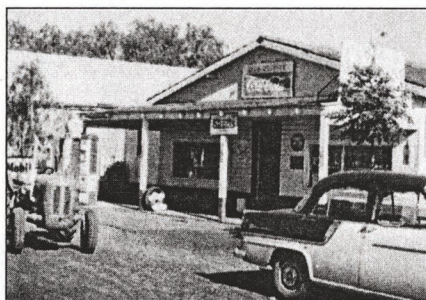
In later years Jaspa gave up shearing and we started a mixed business in Nymagee, it was known as Bridle's shop. Jaspa also had a mail run, petrol run, he was an insurance agent and a car registration agent.

Our daughter Elvia and my niece Dolly worked in the shop. We had meals at all hours. We had three petrol bowsers as well. Monday, Wednesday and Friday were the three mail nights, when the goods arrived from Hermidale. The papers would have to be sorted, sausages, etc, weighed, orders done up ready for the mail runs, which delivered the goods out around the properties.

We would also make our own pies. The bread and cold meat were all sliced by hand with a knife, as we had no electric cutter then.

We sold the shop to Johnny O'Cane and we bought a property at Forbes. We lived there for many years, then retired to Parkes where I have been for 29 years. Jaspa died in Parkes in 1992.

While living in Nymagee, after my sister Nellie got married, I took over the dairy. I used to supply the town with milk, cream and home-made butter. When I



Bridle's Store

lived in Forbes I still milked the cows and made butter. I won first prize at the Forbes Show with my butter, also with my flowers. We had a bore pig called 'Omo', who also won first prize at the Forbes Show. We would wash him up with warm water and Omo before taking him to the Show.

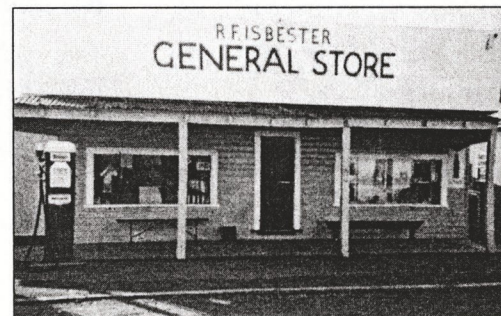
I am 89 now, I live alone and still look after myself, I don't need 'home help' and I still have my good health.

The Isbester Store - Rhonda A Isbester

My family had lived in the Nymagee area since 1957. When the Nymagee Shop was looking for a new partner around the end of 1965, Mum and Dad decided to take the plunge. Mum moved into partnership with John O'Kane and Stan Griscuis. Dad stayed out as a silent partner. Mum was fed up with Correspondence School, she had been teaching her six children over the previous eight years. Leonie, the youngest, was able to attend the Nymagee School under the teaching of Trevor Jones.

The five years we spent in Nymagee were what I would call an eye opener. The business with John and Stan was a failure due to many factors. Mum and Dad reopened the little shop 'R F Isbester' General Store, on a much smaller scale and carried on serving the Nymagee district. I helped serve in the store with Mum.

Our shop was situated directly across the street from the other store run by George and Pauline Pusell. Mum and Pauline were in business opposition but remained firm friends over the years and spent many a time yarning together. Both knew each other's good or not so good customers. I remember Mum telling us the story about a family travelling through Nymagee and they were in need of fuel for their car. Unbeknown to Mum at this stage they also had no money. Apparently their next move was to fool Mum into thinking they had a very sick baby wrapped up in a towel that they were now holding and needed to get to the Doctor in a hurry. Mum fills up the car, the family drive away without paying and Mum finds out later that the same deed had been carried out more than once by the culprits! Another story of gloom was after Mum had filled the car the customer said they had no money to pay for the fuel but could they trade their transistor radio for the debt. Yes, you guessed it, after vanishing in a cloud of dust the radio was found not to be of working order!



Long opening hours seven days a week took their toll and we really wanted to be living on the land. When the property 'Marigold' came on the market we packed up shop. 'Marigold' was just south of Nymagee so we didn't lose the friends we'd made along the way. After closing shop all the outstanding debts by customers were paid in full within the three months, bar one. This person promised to pay his bill but he said it may take awhile. Do you know he kept his word and repaid his account when he returned to the district years later!

My Story by Joan Whiteman (Dunne)

Tony Dunne came to Cobar by train from Elaine in Victoria in the year of 1905. When he arrived in Cobar he asked about the mail coach to Shuttleton. He was told to see Oscar Betts, who told him the coach was going out in two days time. Dad said he would walk out to Shuttleton and be there before the coach - which he did.

On the road out he called into the Priory Hotel, it was where Killala is now. Dad asked the hotel lady if he cut her some wood, would she give him a meal. After talking for a while she asked him where he was going. He said "to Shuttleton", where his brothers Jack and Pat Dunne were cutting wood for the mine. The lady gave him a meal saying he could pay for it next time he came past.

Dad worked with his brother cutting wood until the mine closed down. From Shuttleton they moved to Mount Hope, cutting wood for the mine there. When this mine closed they went fencing on the surrounding stations.

In 1911 they applied by ballot to get a living area block of land. The three of them were lucky enough to get one each. Dad's block was 13,000 acres, he called the property Gilbert Park.

By this time he had his own drays and horse team. He kept on working with his horse teams carting wool and supplies to Shuttleton. He also moved houses from Shuttleton to Cobar.

In 1922 he married Muriel Shuttle and worked the property. They had six daughters and two sons, living on Gilbert Park all their married lives.

Mum passed away in February 1957, Dad lived on until July 1968.

In 1962 Shirley Kershaw and myself went to the CWA Group Conference at Collereina to ask permission to re-open the country Women's Association at Nymagee. The conference gave permission to re-open the branch.

During my time as a member I have been Secretary, President (twice), Vice President and a delegate to Sydney conferences. Also at Group conference I have held positions as councillor and handicrafts officer - I still hold this position.

The Mystery of the Missing Toe Bit Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)

At the age of seven or eight, I'm not too sure, my brothers and sisters and I were playing rounders on an acre of scorched earth just down from the house. Running around after I hit the ball, I felt a quick pain in my left toe, and it started to bleed. I called out 'I'm going home, I've cut my foot'.

Halfway home I looked at my toe and couldn't believe that half of it was gone. My Mum put my foot in a dish of water which was soon full of blood. Dad then started up the old T Model Ford and Mum wrapped my foot in a dozen or so baby nappies, and we went three miles into town to the bush nurse, who stopped the bleeding and asked where the part of the toe was.

But the missing bit was never found, or what I had cut it on. Needless to say, one big toe is smaller than the other.

Nymagee Debutantes - circa.1930



1. Pauline Wright (Pussell)
2. Cath Mackey
3. Pauline Collins
4. Jess Nicholson

5. Doris Hudson (Harland)
6. Beat Burnett (Mackey)
7. Eunie Harland (Warner)

Bob Setter's Story

My first thought of Nymagee are when my parents, Tom and Lillian left Sydney and brought me and my sister, Thelma, back to Pinefield to live. We went to live with the Werner's, who had reared my Dad after his mother died when he was three weeks old.

We came by mail coach from Hermidale, the mailman's name was Heitzman, I think he was German. We then moved into town and lived in an old house about where the Park is now.

I started school at the convent up on the hill, I think this would be about 1930. When the Public School opened I went to it. Miss McKinnon was our first teacher until a Mr. Smith came. Some of the kids there at that time were: Kershaws, McKays, Harlands, McKinnon, Norton, Bramston and Innes. I can't think of any more.

In regards to the town it had a cricket team, a football team and more than one tennis team.

There was a dance in the hall nearly every Saturday night in the winter months, some big balls were also held.

There were two bakers: Norton's was one and they sold their bread for sixpence a loaf. The other baker (I can't think of his name) sold his bread for fourpence a loaf.

There were two general stores, one run by Dick McLean and the other run by Tom Wright. Eb McLean had the butcher shop.

The two tea rooms were run by Ethel Werner and Mr. McKay. The Rooney family ran the hotel and billiard room.

Nymagee had two picture shows at this time, Tom Wright had the 'talkies' and Alf Burton had the silent movies, most had a show on Saturday nights.

Bill Carson had the barber shop near the hall.

There were three carriers. Tom Wright had a horse team and wagon and he used to go to Bobby Mount. Alby Ware had a truck, carting from Hermidale. Alf Burton had a big Thorny Croft truck which had solid rubber tyres - it would have been a rough ride in those on the roads back then.

I remember the first bush nurse coming. Before the bush nurse Mrs. Levy used to be the lady all the kids would go to and she would also be midwife to all the women having babies.

Every so often there would be a horse race meeting at the sports ground, down on the Canbelego Road. Bike racing was also very popular. There was always something going on - from church on Sundays, buckjump shows and sometimes a circus.

There was always something for kids. Summer time was swimming in the mine tank.

My father was the mailman before Bill Gudgeon, driving the mail from Nymagee to Hermidale.

I have happy memories of my childhood days at Nymagee

The Kershaw Family - told by Peter

Arthur Kershaw married Mary Manns on 12th August 1925. Arthur was better known as 'Cockey'. Arthur and Mary had eight children - three girls and five boys. Two of the children died young. The children were all born in Cobarr, Peter was born on 31st January, 1934.

I started school in 1939 at the old school down over the creek, where the festival ground is now. I rode 3 miles to school, I had to learn to ride a bike in three days before I could start. I went to school there until the building was condemned, the school then shifted up to the Police Station, I went there until I was old enough to leave.

My family bought the school building in late 1945 and it was taken to Hill View, where the timber was used to add a couple of rooms to our house. My first teacher was Arthur Smith, he was a very strict teacher and cruel with the cane. I had a few different teachers before I left school at 15.

My father, 'Cockey', worked on the DMR for 26 years, he worked with Ernie Bramston, better known as 'Toddler'. They had two horses and drays, they would fill up the drays with gravel, this was done by digging the gravel with a pick and shovel, then they would walk along the road filling the holes with shovels of dirt. At the weekends they would ride their bikes home to Nymagee, then ride back on Monday morning. Cockey was the first grader driver in Nymagee.

My mother was a great horse woman, she trained the family racehorse, 'Tibby', it won several races in the Nymagee district.

I played football for the Nymagee Magpies in 1955-56. I played in the front row - I was about eleven and a half stone 'wringing wet'!

Some stories I remember are:

Ray Maddison, better known as 'Bing', was a resident of Nymagee. Bing was on his way home to Nymagee from Euabalong with a double mattress his mother had given him. He came upon a beer truck that had rolled over - this was much to Bing's delight! The accident was out near Iris Vale. The truck driver said to Bing, 'Take as much as you like'. Bing threw the mattress out and loaded as much beer as the old station wagon would hold, he never came back for the mattress.

Ted Werner was a German and always said things back to front or upside down. He had a particular saying 'By joves'. Ted and his wife had the property called 'Pine Field'. On one occasion we were shearing at 'Pine Field', after we had knocked off for the day we were in a room having a few beers. There were Billy Dillon, Mark and Norm Power, George Pusell, Dick Bramston and myself. A pillow fight started - I threw a pillow at Billy Dillon and Billy fell through a 6 by 4 sheet of fibro in the wall. Ted came in and sat with his back to the hole in the wall, we were all laughing. Ted felt a cold breeze on his back and then he woke up to what had happened. 'Who done that? By joves', asked Ted. Everyone in the room said that they had done it, but George Pusell nominated Dick as the culprit. 'It was not me Teddy, I would not do that Teddy', Dick said. Ted showed a lot of concern about it but after a few more rums he decided that the damage was not as bad as he first thought.

At the same shed we were having a cut-out party. Dick Bramston, who was a very impatient man, decided he couldn't wait for us so he set out to walk to Nymagee. He said he would go and open the gates. It was raining 'an inch a minute' by this stage. Dick returned some considerable time later, soaking wet. When we finally decided to leave, we saw where Dick had walked halfway to Nymagee, then walked back to tell us that the 'road was wet'.

I remember the time George Pusell had his motorbike for sale. This was the bike George had bought so he could run his mail, as the year was a very wet year. Dick asked George, 'How much Georgie, how much Georgie?' George replied, 'I don't know Dick, it is a 200cc'. Dick said, 'Too bloody dear for me Georgie.'

Teddy Werner was the MC at the balls, and he would not let the children dance when the adults were dancing. He would say, 'By joves there, you children sit down there, by joves. No jolly bugging in the corner by joves there Jimmy Wiggins.' The supper would be carried around the hall, sandwiches, cakes and the tea and coffee in big urns, if any was spilt Teddy would say 'By joves there, you are leaking all over the floor, by joves.'

Barry Betts and Teddy Werner were playing Billy Dyson and Roger Mackey at a tennis tournament in Cobar, the courts were where the Council Chambers now stand. Teddy would insist on standing in the middle of the court, so Billy Dyson kept side lining Teddy on his backhand, at last Teddy said, 'By joves there, Billy Dyson you stop doing that by joves there.' After he did it two or three more times Teddy said, 'By joves there Billy Dyson you stop putting the ball up my back passage or I will hit this head over your racket.'

Another funny story about Teddy was when Dolly Stanford and I went with Teddy and his wife, Lil, to Cobar to Donny McLean's wedding. Teddy drove a big silver-grey Humber, which he took great care of. Arriving home back in Nymagee Teddy said to me, 'By joves there Peter, I did drive home all the way in 'tird' gear there you know, by joves.'

Ann Morison (Payton)

It was the 1st May, 1942, when our family arrived in Nymagee. We first stayed at the staff quarters at the old hospital. This was about a mile out of town. Soon afterwards we moved to the Chinaman's garden. My father started a market garden there and sold vegetables and fruit, he would also travel to sell them in Cobar and Nyngan. I remember the boys, Bill and Joe, digging a new well for fresh water - how exciting it was watching the water bubble up from the bottom of this deep hole.

We had two of the biggest fig trees there that I have ever seen and they were great for climbing.

It was from here I started school. School was held at the police station in the court room. If there happened to be court on, we would go to the town hall. When I first started school we used a slate to write on.

We then moved from the chinaman's garden out to the Government tank and lived there until I left Nymagee, although my family lived there for some years later. We were very close to the foothills of the hills - Bald Hill and the Sugar Loaf, these were great for exploring, when someone would come with me. I don't think I'd manage to climb them these days.

There was a Mrs Hamilton and her two children, Ivor and Zillah, whom I was friends with. They owned an old army blitz, and some Sundays would collect as many children as was let go and take them on picnics, these were fun.

In December the P&C would hold a Christmas tree party for all the children. The tree would be large and tied to the roof of the town hall. Most of the presents would be tied to the tree but heavier ones would be near it. 'Santa' would arrive to screams and yelling, we would already have had a party.

After all the mess was cleaned up, a local band would play and the adults would dance. These dances were where us children learnt to dance. I think there was a dance every Saturday night - any excuse was good enough to hold one.

My father opened a fruit and vegie shop, a few groceries, lollies and soft drinks. Each Friday night we would receive ice cream in a lined canvas container and had hot ice inside to keep the ice cream containers frozen. Our shop was right in the middle of the main street.

If I started at the police station (our old school) and travelled down the street we would come to the two storey Post Office. Next to it was Tom Wright's store, a longish building, I think they sold petrol, I can't remember what else.

Further on was where Ted Coleman lived, he would ride his bike out to our place to visit my parents. Across the road was the Bakers, it was also owned by one of the Wrights. Next to it on the corner was the hotel. Around the corner on the right hand side was the Town Hall (right behind the hotel), then there was a shop.

When we first came to Nymagee this shop was owned by Minnie Monaghan, then Mrs McLean, and I'm not sure who else. There was another one nearby, then at the end was my friends, the Hamiltons.

When I was little, and the cat had kittens, Mrs Hamilton would buy them, they had lots of cats at their home.

Across the street from the Hamiltons was what was once a bank, but was now a grocery store owned by George and Pauline Pusell. They had a daughter, Colleen. Next to the Pusells was the Wares - Alby, Biddy and their three children, Jimmy, Beverly and Patsy.

Next was another old hotel, it was only an old stone relic locked up and falling down - forbidden to us children.

Then there was our shop which was a long wooden building. Years before there had been a full block of shops along here, including a butcher's shop. This butcher's shop had several owners, the one I remember most was Frank and Lil Carson and their children.

Nymagee was a mining town at one time, but when we arrived there in 1942 there was not any mining being done - the mine had closed down.

At one time we had pictures every six weeks at the hall. I can remember there was a buckjumpers show once.

Nymagee also had a tennis club. We lived about 2 miles out of town and I would leave my racquet at the laundry door so I would not have to play.

On Sundays the men would play cricket and football in the winter.

Even though we were out of town I was never lonely, I always found something to do. Dad had planted a lot of peach trees, it was my job to water these. I would take something to sit on and a book. I can still lose myself in a good mystery. My choice of authors has changed over the years but not my love of reading. I can also remember the old gramophone, I played all the old 48's there was.

I remember the big Government tank had catfish in it and most Sunday afternoons families would arrive with a picnic hamper and settle themselves around the dam to fish.

I had one special friend, Dolly. We have been friends for sixty years now and still keep in touch.

The Snake Story — Thelma Wade (nee Kershaw)

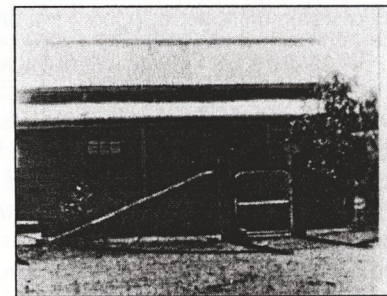
We kids all had pushbikes to ride to school. To help us carry all the bits and pieces there was a bike bag on the bar, a boy's bike of course.

This day, riding along I spotted a snake, so I got off to have a look. The snake took refuge in my bike bag and wouldn't come out, so I had to turn the bike upside down to dislodge him.

My Memories of Growing Up in Nymagee

By Dolly Betts (Stanford)

My first memories of growing up in Nymagee was when we were living in the convent, which was an old weatherboard building. It had been closed as a boarding school in 1938 and then let out for rent. The parish priest from Nyngan (Dean Sexton) would come out to Nymagee and stay the night at our house (the convent). He would then have mass Sunday morning at the church. Dean Sexton never ate his evening meal with us. I would sit at his table and have my meal with him, he would tell me stories of the places he had been to and the great things he had seen.



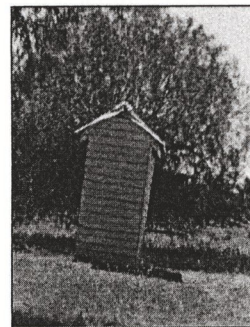
Judds Cottage

Our family went to live in Judd's cottage on the 29th October, 1943, this is the house between the two churches in Nymagee. Over the years many families have lived there and it has had many repairs. We had no running water, only two rainwater tanks for drinking and cooking.

Every Saturday a 'turn' of water was carted from the Government tank, this was for washing and bathing. We had no garden because of the lack of water. There was no electricity - only kerosene lights, in later years we 'went modern' and got Aladdin lights.

The washing was done by boiling the copper, which was out in the backyard. The white clothes were always boiled first, next the towels and lastly the work clothes. The dirty clothes were scrubbed on a washboard with home-made soap.

The ironing was done with flat irons, these were heated on top of the stove. To find out if the iron was hot enough you would take the iron off the stove with a pot holder (this was because the handle of the iron got very hot), you would then spit on the face of the iron - if it sizzled it was ready. Ironing was mostly done at night.



The Long Drop

As water was so short you only bathed once a week. The copper was boiled for hot water, this was mostly Saturday afternoon. The water was carried by bucket to the bath. All washing and bath water was saved to wash the floors, then put on any trees that were in the yard. Our toilet (the long drop) was about 'half a mile' down the flat - or it seemed that far when you had to go.

Our cold drinking water came from a water bag hanging under a peppercorn tree in the backyard.

When Nymagee had no butcher or general store our groceries and meat came out from Hermidale with the mail truck. Bill Gudgeon was the mailman, his son, Bung, now drives the mail out to Nymagee from Hermidale three times a week. In early days there was no such thing as an esky, our butter came rolled in a piece of wet bag. We always ordered corned meat and a loin of chops - the chops were not cut as they went bad quicker if cut.

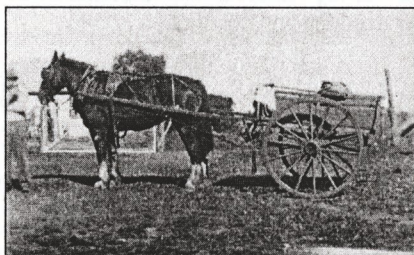
We had no fridge, only a drip safe - this was a square shaped cupboard with gauze and charcoal around the sides. On the top of the safe there was a container full of water, the water dripped down the sides and kept the cooler cool.

Later on we got a fridge, it was a square box with a lid on top and a water tank at one end. The fridge also had a small tank which was filled with kerosene and had two burners. The burners were lit every day and would burn for about an hour. I can remember having home made ice-cream when we got this fridge. The next fridge was a kerosene one shaped something like the fridges of today. They also had a tank with kerosene and a burner, if the wick was not right they would smoke. This 'smoke' made a lot of mess as it was like soot that came out the flu on the top of the fridge. Many a house fire was caused by the kerosene fridge.

My Uncle, Bill Stanford, had many jobs: scrub cutting, ring barking, carting wood for the Nymagee mine and droving. What I remember the most was his horse team and wagon he had when he was tank sinking. There are a few tanks around Nymagee called Stanford's tank, he also did a lot of tank work around Hermidale. Uncle Bill would stay away at the tank work for weeks at a time or until he had enough money to bring home to keep the house going. On Friday afternoon he would ride home from Hermidale on his bike, he would come through the hills as this was a short cut. On Sunday he would ride back to his work. He always tried to get me some lollies from Hermidale before he came home. Once I remember he was unable to get into Hermidale so he didn't have any lollies to bring home for me, so he strapped a tin of quandongs to the handle of his bike and brought them home for me.

Bill loved his horses and dogs. He taught me to ride but he was always frightened I would fall off, so he would walk for miles leading my horse, this was mostly how I got a ride. Bill never got straight on his horse after he saddled it, he would walk the horse while he rolled a cigarette and smoked it, then he would mount his horse and walk him before trotting.

I went to school on 1st March, 1943, down at the old school over the creek. On my first day I had a new school port and a new bike, which had been bought



Bill Stanford

from Wright's store. I got to about where the Ellison's now live and met up with Velma Bramston. Velma started to 'dink' me on the bike and we had a beaut buster. I arrived at school with skinned knees, my new school port broke and squashed sandwiches.

When the school closed later that year, a new school was opened in the courthouse. I went to school there until I was about 14 when I had to leave school to keep house for my grandmother and uncle. My first job was ironing starched pillow shams, I was so proud of the job. How I wish I had never learned to iron ...

When we were teenagers the fashion was full skirts and rope petticoats. These petticoats were made out of cotton or lawn with a frill about six inches from the hem and starched stiff. They certainly took some ironing with the flat irons.

We always had plenty to fill our time in. Through the week we would go to each others homes playing cards or records. Mrs Hamilton, her son Ivor (who still lives in Nymagee) and her daughter Zillah had a room in their house where we would meet to play table tennis, listen to records, play cards or, as the young ones these days would say, 'hang out'.

Mrs Hamilton was a very clever lady and would make a lot of the costumes for the annual fancy dress ball. She would make them out of paper maché, they would be of birds, animals and a great variety of other things.

We had a Youth Club in Nymagee and if there were no dances or balls on the Saturday night, the Youth Club would have a dance. The music was mostly Pauline and George Pusell playing the piano and drums, and sometimes Bill Hodge with his accordion. The Youth Club would also hold a 21st party, engagement party or whatever else we were asked to do.

Nymagee had a great lot of balls, one of the best orchestras to play for our balls was The White Rose from Binnaway. I remember one ball where there were two orchestras - the sun was coming up when the ball ended! Every ball had a MC and Ted Werner was good at this. He was also great at getting the floor ready for a ball. He would work on it for days using sawdust, kerosene, candle wax and then 'pops' to dress the floor. It was a pleasure to dance on.



Picnic on top of the Baldy Hill

Another of our past times was going on picnics. We would climb the Sugarloaf or Baldy Hill (hills around Nymagee), eat our sandwiches and drink our bottle of water. One girl would always have 'rock mutton' sandwiches and we always swapped her sandwiches. It was not until many years later we found out that 'rock mutton' was actually goat meat - we were not impressed!

Tennis was a great sport in Nymagee, and is still played every fortnight. The 'good' players would not let us young people play as we were not good enough. So, Bill and Ethel Hodge said we could build some tennis courts at their property, 'The Peak'. Working bees were held over a few weekends to build the three courts, we ended up having so many players that three more courts were built.

The Peak had a very strong team and played in all the competitions around the district. I think our tennis was going so strong and we all had such a good time that the Nymagee tennis just folded. Bill Hodge put the lights on three courts so we could have night tennis, running his welder for the power for the lights. You might be half-way through a set and the welder would run out of fuel. No-one minded waiting until Hodgie (Bill was always known as Hodgie) refuelled the welder and then we would start playing again. Bill and Ethel were great people, they loved helping the young kids. Ethel would play the piano after tennis for us to have a sing-a-long, and she was always ready with plenty of food for our tennis days.

Hodge was a great community worker for Nymagee, he belonged to most organizations in the town. There are very few community facilities that do not bear the trademark of Bill Hodge. Hodgie could do most handyman jobs and was always willing to help, most times not receiving any payment. My first birthday cake was made by Hodgie, I was 18. He made me a round fruit cake and as he had no icing tools he made an icing bag out of a piece of paper to write Happy Birthday.

Colleen Pusell (Dillon) and I made our debut at the Convent Ball in Nyngan, 1955 - it poured rain all day. Ball time arrived and it was raining harder. Colleen and I were both wrapped in a canvas curtain so our frocks would not get wet, we were also holding two big umbrellas - we must have looked a sight getting into the hall. My frock was pleated tulle but because it was so wet the pleats had all dropped out.

Often on a Sunday afternoon the family would go and rob a beehive. One particular Sunday, Uncle Ern, Jasper Bridle and a few of us kids went out to Old Hartwood Station to rob a hive. Uncle Ern worked at the mine in Cobar so he assured us he knew all about blowing down the tree with dynamite. The charge was set, the fuse lit and we all took cover behind the old truck. There was an almighty BANG!! Up went wood, bees, honeycomb and dust - we came home with no honey.

I have a couple of more funny stories about robbing a beehive. Barry, myself and our two children, Rhonda and David, robbed a hive near our home at The Peak. Barry cut down the tree, got plenty of smoke going by burning a bucket of green leaves (to hunt the bees away), then scooped out the honeycomb from the hive and put it into an old tub and we drove home feeling very pleased with ourselves. We spread the honeycomb out on a sheet of tin in the sun so the honey would drain out of the comb, and then we went inside for lunch and being a hot day we all had a rest. We went out later that afternoon to see how much honey had drained out - not a drop of honey to be seen! The bees had come and taken it all back! So a lot

of work for nothing.

There was another occasion when the Dillons, Colbrans (relatives from Nyngan) and ourselves went to Shuttleton to rob a hive. We had an old fellow caretaking Shuttleton for us at the time, the kids had nicknamed him 'Pork'. He was nicknamed this because the first time we met him he was carrying an old bag with a porcupine in it - he was taking it home to eat! As you've probably guessed 'Pork' wasn't a very clean fellow - quite the opposite.

Anyway, Barry cut down the tree, got the smoke going and then started to scoop out the honeycomb, putting it in an old tub. By this time old 'Pork' had arrived, dressed in a chaff bag with two holes cut for his eyes and two slits for his hands - this was so the bees would not bite him. 'Pork' started to pick up the honeycomb out of the tub, suck out some honey, then throw it back into the tub, then get a fresh bit and do the same thing. After watching this, and being well aware of 'Pork's' somewhat dubious hygiene standards, none of us would eat the honey - so old 'Pork' got the lot. Once again we went home with no honey.

When I was a kid we always milked cows and separated some of the milk. My job was to soak the separator and then deliver the milk on my bike to the customers. One particular day, I remember delivering Pauline Pusell's milk and I said to her "Send your own lazy kid, I'm not bringing your milk again". I am afraid this did not do me any good ... I was sent back to apologise to Pauline, from then on I took the milk each day without any more comments.

After school I would have to wash the separator and set it up for the next morning. Next I would have to get the cows in and lock up the calves. Then it would be time to get the pinewood in so the fire could be lit in the morning. I can't remember ever having a lot of time for just playing.

One very big occasion I can remember was the day Billy Hudson came back to Nymagee after being a prisoner of war. The whole town went out to the Kangaroo Springs on the Hermidale Road to welcome Billy home. Pauline and George Pusell were on the back of Alby Ware's truck playing music. There was great cheering and singing as everyone was so happy that Billy had come home. Poor Billy could not speak, I don't know how long he had been a prisoner of war.

In April 1960 I married Barry Betts, our wedding was in the Catholic Church and our reception was in the hall. Our house next door to the Church was full of relatives and friends. Everyone was trying to bath and get ready, as well as trying to get me 'to the church on time'. My Uncle Bill was to give me away. We were all ready to get into the car when someone noticed Uncle Bill all dressed up in his suit but with his old work belt on. After a bit of a hassle the belt was changed and we got to the Church on time.

I have always loved any kind of needlework and craft. My Uncle Jasper Bridle taught me to knit before I went to school. After I left school I taught sewing for a while at the Nymagee school.

Over the years, Barry and I have been on a lot of committees in Nymagee. We have always worked to keep the town going.

Nymagee has something special about it, most people who have left usually come back for a visit or they like to keep in touch with people who still live here. In 2001 Meda Harland, who lived in Nymagee for many years, was brought back by her family to be buried in the Nymagee Cemetery. In April, 2002, another former resident of Nymagee, Reg Hudson, was buried near his family in the Nymagee Cemetery.

Nymagee will always be home to a lot of people.

'What I Remember About Growing Up in Nymagee' **Coral Corrigan (nee Lark)**

Although I did not go to school in Nymagee it is where I spent my teenage years.

I remember the dances and balls, we would all have a new dress. The people would start arriving from the surrounding towns and properties in the afternoon and the hall would be crowded for the balls. It was a good life growing up in Nymagee, we always found things to do like going to Jolly Jacks picking mulberries or figs. Friday nights we would all go to Bridles or Pusell's shop to wait for Joe White to arrive with the mail truck from Hermidale, the closest rail town. There would be fresh bread and newspapers and then we would all go to the Post Office and the mail would be passed out through the window.

If there was a good movie on in Cobar we would all pile into Ivor Hamilton's car and he would drive us to Cobar and bring us home safely. There were no tar roads in those days. Ivor was a very quiet fellow, never said much but was always willing to take us girls to the movies.

Then there was tennis in the winter time and cricket in the summer, everyone would go along to play or watch.

I remember also travelling to Coolabah, Byrock, Nyngan, Hermidale and Canbelego to watch Nymagee football team play.

I was married in the Catholic Church and my first child was Christened there.

I remember when I was 4 years old I was staying in Nymagee with my Aunt and Uncle Jessie and Frank Harland. Dolly Betts (then Dolly Stanford) gave me a china baby plate with the alphabet around the edge and two little girls on the bottom feeding chickens. I used it for my four sons and then passed it on to my eldest son for his daughter Brielle Conley, Brielle is now a teenager and John still has the plate and it does not have a chip on it.

Dolly Betts, then Dolly Stanford, was bridesmaid at my wedding.

Hello out there, this is your Captain calling - Bill Rooney

There was a time before the radio, television, talking pictures, electric trains, and even computers, and life was very primitive. There were no washing machines, nor any refrigerators and airconditioning was not even dreamt of. Life in the hotel at Nymagee and all other country towns was made more difficult because of extreme water shortages. The good news being that it was only necessary to have a bath once a week on a Saturday morning, and the one tub of water could wash three or four persons, before being used on the garden.

Naturally there was no running water, so it was always carted around from the galvanised tanks, in large buckets or drums. Electricity was not available and lighting was done by candles, kerosene lamps, carbine lights and later pump up petrol lamps. Deodorants were non-existent so we all smelled the same, and no-one cared.

Now for the better news, when I was returned home from the three year stay at the 'Peak', Bedooba, in my seventh year, Mrs Carr gave us a fine old Jersey cow named Molly because we had a great milk shortage in town. Molly had two horns which turned in towards her eyes, that had to be sawn off around twice a year, and she was a great producer of calves and milk. Shortly after arrival she had a heifer calf which we called Millie, and the milk supply flowed, a cow yard was built at the back of the pub, and a calf pen erected together with a bale, so the cow could watch the calf while being milked. Then the jobs started.

Each evening at 5.00 pm the cow and calf had to be found on the local common, and drive on foot back to the cow yard, and to stop the calf stealing all the milk, the calf was locked in the pen, and the cow in the yard. They proceeded to bellow to each other all night, but being well away from the pub we let them bellow.

Next morning at 7.00 am I would go with Mum to the yard with two buckets, and a food bucket with bran and molasses, and bale the cow, leg rope it to stop it kicking, tie up its tail to stop it flicking, give it a bucket of bran and molasses, and stand clear while Mum proceeded to milk a couple of gallons of Pure Cream Milk from Molly. During milking if Molly held back the milk the calf was let out and proceeded to vigorously suck its breakfast and when the milk started to flow again the calf was hurled back into the pen, and Mum proceeded to milk. Not an easy job as the calf grew bigger, when it was much bigger it was weaned and no longer needed the milk.

After milking they were let out onto the enormous Nymagee common to graze all day until they were rounded up at 5.00 pm. On the common there were a couple of large red bulls and the problem started as Millie got older, and on foot I could not get them to come home, and could not understand why. On one occasion they led me into the bush for around six miles and I became hopelessly lost, and was found by the rescue party at 8.00 pm. Not hard to guess what happened next, Molly and Millie both had heifer calves which I named Minnie and Moana.

The next year the four of them had a calf each, and so on, and when we had a total of 20 odd, the boys were sent to the butcher, and returned to the pub and onto the dining room.

The four girls continued to keep Mum and I in an all round permanent job, and buckets of milk kept rolling into the pub, and a lot of it turned into cream, and whipped into butter. Mum was a great milker of cows, but never goats, and a mini industry started with poor old Molly, who died when I went away to school probably from a broken heart. The first of the calves stopped me from having a successful rodeo career, when she dropped me on my head, and walked over me, so I took up cricket instead.

While we were at school Mum and Dad went to Canbelego Hotel and took about four of the cows with them and the process started all over again in a different town. On our school holidays I never lost my job, and returned home twice a year, and started the old round up again, but not on foot, but with the luxury of an old second hand push bike.

My two brothers always avoided the rounding up chore, because they seemed to not have the bush sense that I was supposed to have, but I now know that that was a whole load of bulldust.

In between school, and 5.00 pm I became a very good lemonade, and cordial maker, and often mixed the brew, washed the bottles, and filled and sealed the marbled bottles, and surprised Dad who was going to do it tomorrow. Whenever we worked at it together he would always sing lots of Irish songs. Not much of a voice but he sure knew the words, and the tune. I was lucky I inherited my voice from him, but also his love of finding a job to do. So I was blessed to have the best and fastest milkmaid in the west for my mother (she could also cook), and an awful singer for my father (but he could work very hard and was a great axeman and athlete) but he knew the words.

Not a riveting story, but a true one, and I might add a happy one, and grinding as it may have been, and dirty from dust, there is nothing I would change, except that I should have studied the piano harder, and probably persevered with my rodeo career. Who knows??? John Wayne eat your heart out, except that Hollywood was a long way from Nymagee and Canbelego. Where was Rupert when we needed him??

Funny thing, we never noticed the smells of the cows, and the dunny, and we had no water to hose either of them out, and becoming adept at swatting flies, I am certain it helped tune our co-ordination for playing cricket, so all was not lost. Catching the dung in the bucket, and not the milk bucket, was quite a skill not to be taken lightly. I am also pleased the television was not invented for many years, but then we did not have a socket to plug it into, so it really did not matter.

I am sure it was not as interesting as the lives you all lived, but that was all we had.

Did I Tell You the Story About ...? Memories of Nymagee by Barry Betts

My earliest memories of school was doing correspondence at 'Gilbert Park', which was the home of Tony and Mrs Dunne. I stayed at Gilbert Park during the week to go to school, my parents used to have to drive me over on Monday morning but funnily enough I was always able to ride my bike home Friday afternoon without any trouble. There were four or five of us at school together (Sam Dunne, Glenyse Dunne, Elsie Gordon, Pat Dunne, sometimes Bill Gordon and myself). Our teacher was Marge Dunne, who was to later marry my brother Ron. Marge was a good teacher - what she said you did and also remembered it.

These school days were good but we still had our jobs to do before and after school. One of our jobs was to bring in the cows each afternoon, lock up the calves overnight and milk the cows next morning before school. Mabel Dunne used to have to do the milking with Sam and I. Mabel would always have her cow milked and the bucket full in no time, while Sam and I would be 'squirt-squirt' an hour later and still only have half a bucket! Sam and I got sick of Mabel saying, 'Ha-Ha I have finished before you'. So, Sam said, 'I'll fix this Barry'. Early next morning we got to the cow yard first, bailed up Mabel's cow, milked her into our bucket and then put her calf onto her to suck her dry. When Mabel tried to milk her she couldn't get any milk, Sam and I couldn't help ourselves and said to Mabel, 'Ha-Ha, we have finished before you'. Mabel stormed off back to the house, thinking her cow had gone dry. Unfortunately we got 'sprung' when it came to separating the milk - Mabel's cow was the cream cow and our cows were only young heifers. So when Mabel saw that our bucket of milk was the cream milk that morning she realised what we had done - I can still remember running like hell as Mabel was going to tip the bucket of milk over us.

Another job that Sam and I had was to catch some rabbits to feed the dogs. We would set 15 or 20 traps after school and go around them early next morning before school. We would also skin the rabbits, peg the skins out to dry and then sell them later. We had an old horse and buggy to do our trapping in. I can remember that we always wanted to go over the road from Gilbert Park to Killala where Auntie Sylvie lived. This was where all the big rabbit warrens were. Auntie Sylvie would never let us set traps near her place because she had pet cats and she was worried that we would catch her 'precious' cats in the traps. Finally, she gave in and let us set some traps up behind the woolshed about a mile from the house. We were thrilled to be allowed to finally set some traps in the big warren - until the next morning! We were up early in a big white frost, sure of catching some big fat rabbits and what do you think we caught? Auntie Sylvie's big tom cat! We decided we couldn't let it out of the trap because it would go straight home to Auntie Sylvie and she would see the trap marks. Sam said, 'We'll knock it on the head and stuff it down a burrow and mum's the word! So we hit the poor old tom cat on the head

with the setter, stuffed him down the burrow and filled it in with dirt and stones, then continued on our way. We set our traps again the next afternoon (at the same warren!). The next morning we were just near the Killala gate on our way to check our traps, and we could see Aunt Sylvie in her dressing gown waiting for us! Sam and I froze - but we pulled up and said, 'What is wrong Aunt Sylvie?' She said, 'Could you please come in and see Timmy (the tom cat we thought we'd killed the day before), he seems sick'. Sam and I were speechless, every bone in my body had turned to jelly. Sam said, 'Leave the talking to me', that wasn't hard because I was so scared I couldn't talk anyway. So in we go, and there in a box near the open fire was Timmy, eyes all bloodshot and he was covered in dust. I stayed peering around the door while Sam walked up to the box, as soon as Timmy saw Sam he let out an awful howl and took off out the door and under the house. (Lucky for us myxomatosis had been recently released into the rabbits.) So Sam said, 'I'm sorry Aunt, I think Timmy has got Myxomatosis and he will have to be shot.'

In about 1948 I went to Parkes to school, boarding with my Aunt and Uncle and cousins Allan, Peggy and Leanne. Allan and his sisters were State swimmers, so swimming was the sport in their home. I had never even seen an Olympic swimming pool, let alone swam in one. The first introduction to one was when Allan and his mate from across the street (Rex Aubrey, who later swam at the Olympics) took me to the Parkes pool. They asked if I could swim, I replied that 'of course' I can, I have swum in all the tanks at Shuttleton and Gilbert Park - just you watch me! I ran off towards the pool thinking 'I'll show them how to dive in'. I could hear Allan shouting something but too late, I was soaring through the air like Tarzan thinking, 'Just watch this dive by a boy from the bush', when BANG - how was I to know that they made pools shallow at one end.

I left school and came home in 1952.

I can remember visiting many of the big sheep stations around the district with my father, some of these were: Wirlong, Bedooba, Coan Downs and Priory. Dad used to repair the steam engines used to run the overhead shearing gear and I would go with him. Going to Bedooba was like visiting a small town, with buildings, sheds, stables and even a small store. I can remember going to the Bedooba store with mum to get some butter and tea.

Once I went to Bedooba with Dad to repair the steam engine. The shearers were playing the station hands in a game of cricket during the breakdown. They had made a proper cricket ground, and the wicket was an ant bed, this was out in the front of the shearing shed.

Priory was another very big station, during shearing there seemed to be between 40 and 50 men there. The Manager of Priory was very strict, and every year before shearing a letter would be sent to all joining properties notifying them when shearing would start and how long it would go for. The joining landholders were also told when 'strangers day' would be (usually a week before shearing was due to finish),

and you were all expected to be there on that particular day. Strangers day was when all the 'strange' sheep were put in a yard and the sheep had to be picked up by their registered owner. No-one else was allowed to pick their neighbour's sheep up unless a written consent had been given to the stock overseer.

'Strangers day' at Priory was also a picnic day. All the women and children would go to the Scour tank crayfishing and to have a picnic. Meanwhile the men went and picked up their sheep. I can remember one occasion when Mum climbed out on a pile of rails near the water, the rails rolled into the water - I can still see Mum's clothing hanging on the fence to dry.

An Aboriginal gentleman by the name of Alf Pierce was the head overseer at Priory. Alf loved kids, dogs and horses. He rode a big brown horse, and he also gave me my first ride on a horse.

Alf had a cork leg, and he used to play a trick on any one he could. When a new kid or stranger called he would sit down with them to have a yarn and smoke his pipe. He would then clean out his pipe with a pocket knife and then stick the knife in his leg! (the poor visitor didn't know that his leg was cork).

In the 40's and 50's mustering sheep or cattle was done by horse or pushbike. In the 50's the Bantham motorbike came along, however, they were not really reliable - 'ride away and walk home' was their motto. I rode horses for mustering until about 1968 then I got a Honda 90, this was my first motor bike. The motor bike cut mustering time in half, even though I still believe horses are better suited for mustering cattle.

I was always taught to look after your horse because you needed it to last all day when you were mustering. The usual rule was that you caught your horse and saddled him before breakfast. Then you would start out by leading him for a few hundred yards, or until the first gate, then re-tighten the girth. After mounting you would walk him for a mile or so, then trot and canter, then back to walk - NEVER straight into a full gallop unless absolutely necessary. Nothing annoys me more than to see someone throw on a saddle, jump on and set the horse off at a full gallop. If we had done this in my day the stock overseer would have kicked us in the pants and you wouldn't have got another job with his stock.

There are so many 'colourful characters' involved in the history of Nymagee, some that come to mind are: Dick and Toddler Bramston, Cocky Kershaw, Frank Carson, Jack Slater, Jackie Little, Ted Werner, Victor Clark, Ivan (Cyanide) Chandler, Donald and Mrs Murchison, Bill Stanford, Bill Hodge, Banjo Patterson, the Rooneys, George Pusell and Jack Mackey. All good hard-working people that came to Nymagee for many different reasons.

Dick Bramston always wore a big black overcoat in the winter and he always had a pocket full of lollies for us kids (mostly black cats). He would say 'have a black cat, Barry', and he would be very offended if you refused. After you licked the black fur from the coat off the lolly it was quite good.

Ivan Chandler (Cyanide) was a very good mechanic, he had an old bus as his workshop and living quarters. Cyanide could repair anything from a Cat tractor to a ladies watch, he had glasses as thick as the bottom of a bottle. On one occasion he repaired Mrs Marriott's watch on the bar at the Nymagee Hotel, pulled it completely to pieces and quite a few hours and whiskies later he put it all back together again.

Donald and Mrs Murchison worked for Ken McKinnon and lived at the old hospital. Donald also worked at the butcher shop for a while. They were a very 'sedate' couple - very much the lady and gentleman. On Saturdays they would come down to the hotel where they would have a few drinks and listen to the horse races. Their mode of transport was a Ferguson tractor and a trailer. On one particular Saturday they came to town, Donald driving the tractor in his black suit and bowler hat and Mrs Murchison dressed 'to the nines' in her best clothes, white hat, jewellery and gloves, sitting in a cane chair in the trailer. When it came time to go home Donald was 'stepping a bit high' after a day at the pub. As he took off up the road, he gave the old Ferguson tractor full throttle - this upended 'Mother' in the trailer and for as far up the road as we could see was Mrs Murchison's legs sticking up in the air with the cane chair on top of her. Donald never looked back.

I can't leave out some stories of my Uncle Phil Betts - he was always up to some sort of trick. At one stage he had the butcher's shop in Nymagee and he would deliver the meat around town in an A Model ute, this, of course, attracted all the town dogs, who liked nothing better than to 'cock' their leg on the butcher's wheels. So Uncle Phil rigged up an electric shock system (within the electrical system of the ute). As soon as the dogs started on his wheel he would switch it on and 'ZAP' they copped it. Just about every dog in town got a zap - pretty soon Uncle was able to drive around town and all the dogs disappeared when they saw him coming.

The local constable asked Phil to put the 'electric shock' onto the tin fence between the pub and the hall on dance nights, to stop the 'dirty scoundrels' from peeing on the fence. During a break at the dance everything was quiet when all of a sudden there was an almighty roar 'Phil Betts I'll kill you when I get my hands on you!!' And who should come through the door very red faced and holding his 'you-know-what' but the local constable.

Uncle Phil passed this trick onto me, and of course I had the need to use it on several occasions. In 1958 I bought my very first ute - a Zepha, of which I was very proud. I was courting Dolly Stanford at the time, and would arrive in town for the weekend with the ute all shiny. The town dogs obviously thought 'there's nothing better than a nice new bush ute to cock your leg on', so I was no sooner in town than they would descend upon my wheels. Time for the electric shock to be introduced ... I parked in front of Bridle's shop and sure enough over came this half bred cattle dog belonging to Jackie Little, ready to 'do' all four wheels. I was ready for him, he circled around, sniffing and peeing at the same time, he arrived at the back wheel ... a blue spark got his nose and a blue spark got his 'dinger' at

the same time. He took off with a yell across the street trying to lick his nose and his 'dinger' all at the same time. Whenever I came to town after that he would only stick his head around the corner of Jackie's house.

Arthur Mcleay was another 'old timer' around the Nymagee district. He used to own about twelve dogs and he would walk for miles up in the hills to get a goat to feed his dogs. He would carry the goat home over his shoulders, just like Simpson carrying the donkey.

Another character that used to come to Nymagee every so often was an old fellow on a push bike. I never knew his name but he used to sharpen your scissors, knives and axes. We used to call him the 'scissor grinder'. He had all his wares on his old bike.

Frank Curtis was another gentleman from Nymagee's past. Frank always had a smile on his face and ready for a yarn. He and his wife Sarah lived at the old bakehouse in Nymagee, just near the tennis courts. There is a spot on the corner of the bar at the Nymagee Hotel called 'Curt's Corner'.

Then there was Huey Clark, better known as Houlin Doulin. He came to the Nymagee district as a tank sinker with horses. He and Bill Stanford worked on tanks together. Houlin Doulin had a very loud voice and you could hear him yelling at the horses four miles away.



The Scissors Grinder



William Stanford

My Grandmother - Nellie Pertzel (nee Stanford) by David Betts

I was born in Cobar in 1965, only son of Barry and Daphne (Dolly) nee Stanford. Dad originally came from Shuttleton which was a little mining town out of Nymagee. Mum had lived all of her life in Nymagee.

Rhonda Russell (nee Betts) who is my sister, went away to school in Parkes then Forbes. Later Rhonda married John Russell and had two children Heidi and Alyce. Today they live on a piece of land right on the river just outside of Narromine, N.S.W.

I attended Nymagee School between 1973 and 1976 and finished my schooling in Cobar, I now live at Mirrabooka Station with my wife Lisa (nee Lehmann). My parents own both properties called Mirrabooka and The Peak and we own a property called Bedooba around 60-75kms from Nymagee.

My Grandmother Nellie Pertzel (nee Stanford) was an absolute 'one in a million', I don't think there was anything that she didn't try or do in her life. The one thing that stood out with Nellie was her memory, it was as sharp as a tack. Right up into her eighties - names, dates and places were her thing. So good in fact, that Nellie wrote a book in 1996 at the age of 86 with the help of her Granddaughter, Rhonda. The book was called "From Jolly Jack's to Nyngan - Memories of Nellie Pertzel".

Nellie was born in Nymagee in a house called Jolly Jack's on the 25th March, 1910 to William and Sarah (nee Fuller) Stanford.

Nellie was one of eight children. Mary born in 1892 married Jack Murphy, Bill born in 1894 never married, Ern born in 1895 married Ella Alchin, George born in 1900 married Nora Overton, Ronald born in 1908 married Marge Grimmins/Gwen, Nellie born in 1910 married Victor Pertzel, Alice born in 1913 married Jasper Bridle. Her father had a bullock team and carted copper from Nymagee to Bathurst. Nellie's father died in 1924 and her mother died in 1952.

Sadly Nellie past away in July 2000, in the Nyngan Hospital. Leaving Vic alone after being married for 53 years. Nellie and Vic retired to Nyngan sixteen years ago.

I would like to share some of the stories my Grandmother wrote in her book.

Nellie lived in and around Nymagee for 76 years.

Nellie used to always say that they had lots of 'ups and downs' out on the land at Nymagee. She thought there were more downs than ups. The following are extracts from her book.

We had a water drought for over a year and had to cart water. As there was no grass, we cut scrub for four thousand head of sheep. Vic would cut the scrub, and I would pull it out and scatter and cut the limbs apart for the sheep to eat until I

couldn't stand any more. My feet would be burning through my shoes from the hot ground, I'd have to get water to cool them down. The drought broke one night and washed miles of fences away.

We had terrible bush fires in 1974-1975. We had the first fire in the back of our property, the Strip, it was called, those fires burnt all around for a month! Burnt everything in front of it, homes, wool, shed, stock, and wild animals. It burnt from Nymagee to Hillston to the other side of Cobar. It was really devastating. It never burnt right into Nymagee town, it first burnt into the cemetery and did damage. We used to make buckets of soups and stews for the fire fighters. Mr. Von Schill picked up the food I cooked, the women would follow behind the fires and feed the men. The shops were good, they helped with the food to feed the fire fighters. One man got burnt to death, out of Cobar.

I've also helped scoop mud out of tanks. I'd have to hold a wonky scoop to clean a bank of mud, it was a scoop with two wooden handles. We pulled the scoop with a truck, a hard job, not a woman's job, but to get on we tried very hard. Vic would drive the truck and I would walk behind with the scoop, mud up to my knees, I went with Vic cutting young pine trees, day after day, like a man. He sort of expected me to go with him. I have helped to fence, pull wire, and clean out the post holes. It broke me down in the finish.

I remember a story about Walter Broome. He was friendly with my brothers and on one occasion he got a sore throat and couldn't swallow too well. My brother Ronald had collected some crow's eggs and I sent them down to Walter to have for his breakfast (he didn't know they were crows eggs). When he got better I told him that they were crows eggs, he was very cross and said, "You are not worth being hanged over or I would kill you". God Bless him, he has passed on now. He went to Cobar to work on the mine, he got dust on his lungs and it killed him.

When we were young in Nymagee it was a thriving little town. There were seven hotels, a two-storey Post Office and a large brick Police Station. There was a brick Hospital, an underground baker and the Estate Agent was Mr. Morris Levy, he was a very popular man. Mr. Levy saw to Births, Deaths and Marriages as well, he was a very busy man. He married a Miss. Rosett from "Hartwood Station" the cream of the district. He had two children Edward and Ivy. Later their mother died and Mr. Levy re-married, he was about seventy by this time. His second wife had twin daughters Pat and Lou, he was into his seventies when they were born. The twins left Nymagee as teenagers and went to Wagga. Pat married Len Von Schill. After that the twins and Len came back to Nymagee. Len was the Post Master.

Mr. Harry Goodwin lived at Restdown on the road to Canbelego and he had a hotel there. Mr. Tom Wright had a Grocery store in Nymagee and he used to go to Canbelego in his truck to collect the goods off the rail at Mount Boppy. He used to stay overnight with Mr. Goodwin at Restdown, which is on the way to Canbelego from Nymagee. He'd once asked Harry could he have a drink. Harry said, "no, I

haven't washed my shirt for bloody months, so I can't spare you a drink of water". He was a real old tuff. Mr. Goodman's wife got sick and while she was in bed dying he used to dig a bit of her grave every day. By the time she passed away he had the grave ready at the back door.

I remember the mail coach used to come three nights a week from Hermidale, we'd get dressed every mail afternoon and go and meet the mail at six o'clock. There was a little lolly shop alongside Mrs. Graham's (between the post office and Kenmur Place), and we'd get a few peanuts and a few mintees and it was a real treat, an afternoon out, and we'd get the mail. They used to come from Hermidale and change the horses half way at Rainbow Ridge. Tommy Pearce was our mailman for years and years

Teddy Werner was another well known character around Nymagee. He was always the MC at the dances. He was a German man and had a bit of a funny accent. We used to do a lot of square dancing and Ted would mean to say, "waltz to your places", but it would sound like "waltz to blazes". Ted had a horse that he couldn't catch, he eventually got it in the yard and he got a fence rail and hit the horse on the head and accidentally killed the horse. Someone said to him, "Ted you've killed the horse", and Ted said, "yes but I did stop her".

Ted's uncles were farmers and they owned "Pine Field". When they died they left the place to Ted. Ted's Uncle Bob was a good foot runner. We were at a Gymkhana in Nymagee once and Bob was running in a race. Ted was cheering on Bob saying, "Come on Bob, Come on Bob! If you don't come first you'll come second and if you don't come second you'll come a lucky turd". Ted was such a funny man you know. They used to serve tea at the dances and the men would bring it to the tables. Ted would mean to say, "don't you fellas spill the tea on the floor", but he would say, "don't you fellas wet on the floor." We had such a lovely time at the dances. Lilly Werner used to play the violin (Lilly was a Bodmire girl from Nymagee). I remember Lilly used to tell me I was a very pretty baby and had lovely curly hair. Lilly used to take me under her wing and do my hair and dress me up. Ted and Lilly were engaged for twenty five years, they wore one engagement ring out.

Mrs. Hamilton had the picture show in Nymagee, she was a very clever artistic woman. We had silent movies then and Mrs. Hamilton would make models for all the pictures and display them in the shop. She would add the music to it too. Mr. Tomms from Manildra would come with the movies every six weeks. He had a huge tent that he would put up alongside Pussell's garage and show the movies in it. I would say we enjoyed the movies then just as much as we enjoy the talky ones now. We used to so look forward to Mr. Tomms coming. I remember going to see the Ten Commandments and we used to have a serial too. Tom Wright had silent pictures too.

We used to have a lot of Gymkhanas and horse races. I can remember going to Kilparney with Ethel Werner - she used to do the catering. Friday afternoons about

six of us would go on the back of a truck with a load of food and we'd stop until probably Monday morning. There were no horse floats, people would lead their horses behind the sulky. I used to go with Mrs. Naughton too, they were the bakers, she was a French woman and would also do catering. Those were big weekends. We had races in Nymagee as well. We used to have football in Nymagee as well, teams would come from all around. I can remember my brothers Tom and Bill playing in Nymagee.

I remember a funny story while we were at Hill View. Barry Betts and Les Waters were putting up our TV antennae for us. They put it up on top of the chimney. While the two men were standing on top of the chimney I decided to light the open fire. I poured the kerosene on the wood, lit the fire and "whoosh" the fireball went straight up the chimney and singed their legs and trousers and I suppose their backsides as well.

Uncle Pat Sullivan was an old Irishman (he was Mum's uncle), he used to be a fencer around the district. He would go bush for about three months at a time and then come home and drink all his wages, he would even drink the Holbrook sauce. Mr. Walker was the publican at the time. He knew Pat would drink all his money at his pub so he would say, "come on in Pat, don't worry about your clothes I have plenty of good clothes for you". Pat would go to the table and eat with them and everything. In the end Pat would have drunk through his money and then Mr. Walker would say, "here now old Sullivan you get out of here, get down to the stables, I've had you". When Uncle Pat had no money left he didn't want anything to do with him. Uncle Pat used to laugh about this as he could see the funny side of it.

In the old days there was a Wrights grocery shop, Crow's had a shop, they live at Lithgow now. Mrs. Jack MacKay had a café which replaced the old pub which May and Mary Finn owned, Phil Betts had a butcher's shop, the public school was near the creek, Jimmy Naughton was the baker. Although the mines were going at that time I can't remember them.

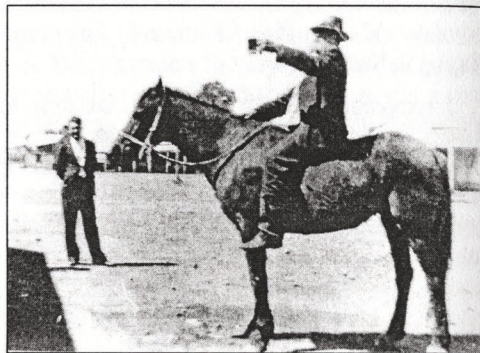
We had an old neighbour, Mr. Alf Hudson, he had a farm next to ours, we were great friends. One particular day he had been to town (Nyngan) and came in to have a chat the next day. I said to him, "Did you buy something good in town yesterday, Mr. Hudson"? He said, "Yes, the most useful thing I ever bought - a wheelbarrow". He said, "I wheeled it down to the tank, filled it with water and wheeled it up to the house, I wash myself in the water, wash my clothes in it, and the dogs drink out of it, the fowls have a drink. I have no worries until the water runs out". Another little story I remember about Mr. Hudson was the day a Mr. Ron Keary offered to drive Alf home. When they got home Alf offered Mr. Keary a drink, he reached under the bed to find a glass, as the glass was a bit dirty he wiped it out with one of his dirty socks. Needless to say Ron declined his offer of a drink. Alf had a sore toe for weeks so he went to the doctor, the doctor said you have something in the toe of your boot, he only had a sock rolled up in the toe of his boot! Alf lived by himself, his wife had died.

I had an old uncle, uncle Tommy Sullivan. They used to call him Amblin' Tommy. His wife, Mary made him some soup one day with a goats head, but she didn't take the eyes out. When Tommy came home from work that night he lifted the lid of the pot to smell the soup. He said, "Oh Mary, I couldn't eat a soup that was looking at me". Amblin' Tommy used to walk home from Mt. Hope to Nymagee, stay the night and walk back again, a distance of about sixty miles each way. He used to come home and check on things because he used to worry that Mary would burn the house down.

JB Windsor was a very special old aboriginal man, he was one of those people that everyone liked. He used to travel about by horse and sulky. Instead of saying "bloody", he used to say "juddy". I remember a particular night when he was camped in Nymagee with his 3 kangaroo dogs. They were all camped together on the ground under JB's blankets. Through the night a fox came too close to the camp and woke the dogs. One of the dogs looked out through a hole in the blanket and took off after the fox, with his head through the hole in the blanket. The dogs chased the fox all the way to the cemetery, before JB could catch them, about 2 miles away. JB said "the juddy dog took off with my blanket and before I could stop him my juddy blanket was destroyed".

We had a very special relation in Nymagee, he was Bill Hodge (Hodgie). Bill married my cousin, Ethel Werner. He had been on the land all his life and when he left his father's property he managed his wife's family property, The Peak. Bill once had a butcher's shop in Nymagee, and his wife Ethel had a mixed business. He and Ethel were great sports people and we used to have lovely tennis days out at The Peak. Bill could also play most musical instruments and was a member of the band at Nymagee. Bill was also a carpenter and a cook, many a birthday cake Bill made for the girls. Hodgie was "one in a million" and everyone's friend. Bill was one of the people responsible for getting the lights put onto the Nymagee Tennis Courts.

In about 1940, my husband's father, Walter Pertzel, came to Nymagee to live. He worked for Paddy McGuire a St. Mary's out of Sydney. He drove a mob of cattle to Nymagee in dry weather and he put them on the town common. We had land around the town called the Common belonging to the townspeople to graze their stock on. After a while he got in tow with an old lady called Mrs. Crow, who owned one hundred acres of land just out of Nymagee. Mr. Walter Pertzel (or Pop as he



JB Windsor

was locally known) purchased this land from Mrs. Crow. Mrs Crow passed away and then he lived there by himself. He had four sons at the Second World War. My husband is Walter's son, Victor Pertzel. He was living in Liverpool (Sydney) with his brother Fred, after returning from New Guinea during the war. He then came to live at Nymagee with his father, in about 1946.

Vic went to work for my Uncle Arthur Werner on a property at Nymagee called The Peak. Vic needed a pair of trousers mended and as I took in sewing, Uncle Arthur's daughter, Ethel, thought I could do the job. One Saturday afternoon, Ethel brought Vic to have a pair of trousers taken up. I took the bottoms up on the trousers, we had afternoon tea then, and the two of them went home.

Vic turned up on the following Sunday morning with two small cabbages for me. From then on, we went out together for a while and married in Nyngan on the 7th January, 1947. We lived at home with my family for a while. The deal with Mum was that I was to housekeep for my board, and Vic had to pay his board. This arrangement didn't work out. There was a cow to milk and my mother thought Vic should milk the cow on Sundays. I milked it all week because Bill and Vic worked away. Mum thought Vic "went too much to the fridge" and complained "why should he sleep in our blankets". So one Sunday afternoon we rang Mr. Dick Collins at "Balowra" Station and asked him if we could rent the old convent off him. We were only there a short time and then we went to look after a property for Tom Harland called Four Corners.

On one occasion he told us to shift fifteen hundred head of sheep to Stony Tank. That tank was twelve miles from the house, but the sheep were in a paddock closer to the tank. He said as he was leaving for Orange, "I'll go and have a look how the water is". He came back and said it is okay. So Vic and myself set off to take the sheep to the tank, I was his offside. When we got near the tank, Vic said "Go and check the tank while I hold the sheep". I went to the tank, there was about twenty eight goats bogged in the mud, and the tank was all but dry. It was drought time and the poor things, had kids while they were bogged. It was terrible to see the state they were in. So we had to take the sheep back to where they came from. It was ten o'clock at night when we got home, we were not very happy I can tell you. It was obvious that Tom never went to look at the tank at all. When we rang him in Orange, all he said was, "put them where you think best". We worked for Tom for about 12 months then we went to work for Frank Weston.

Reg and Winnie Harland

My Mum and Dad (Reg and Winnie Harland) were married at Nymagee in 1932. Mum grew up down around Euston and Robinvale in Victoria. The family moved up to Nymagee after Pop and Nana Bax (Tom and Helena Bax) drew the property 'Hill Plain'. Dad grew up in Nymagee and on the property 'Four Corners'.

After they were married they settled on the property 'Yarranvale'. I have three brothers Reg (Boy) is the eldest then myself, John, followed by Bruce and Lance. We all grew up living at 'Yarranvale'. I remember we had some good times at 'Yarranvale', especially after we had bikes and learned to ride, and at shearing time when the team was there to work in the shed.

Bicycles (push bikes) were a big part of our childhood as we rode them for miles. We had tracks marked out in the scrub country which was mostly turpentine bushes and we even had a workshop as we used to buckle a wheel or two. I think the best track was at 'Shuttleton' (where Barry Betts lived) which used to get a real workout. The bikes were also used to help Dad muster the sheep, when we would pile the bikes, dogs, etc, onto the trailer behind the army jeep and off we would go.

Our bikes were also used when we used to set a few rabbit traps. I remember some frosty mornings when our fingers were frozen even with a pair of socks on for gloves. We kept the rabbits in a 'rabbit screen' which was a strip of hessian stitched together and hung on a pole between trees. After two or three mornings we would have a few pair of rabbits, and would take them to the main road on particular days to meet the 'rabbit truck'. The truck came from Gilgunnia and was driven by Early Johnson who was always late.

I went to primary school in Cobar and stayed with my Aunt Celia. I remember big dust storms which would make it dark in the middle of the day, and the tap water in Cobar was a muddy colour. The school actually closed for a term or two due to an epidemic (I think it was the flu). I then went to live with the Betts at 'Shuttleton' and Barry's sister Pearly taught us both for a while. After school the two of us would go and set traps for rabbits and try to snare kangaroos.

In 1948 I went to boarding school in Sydney. 'Boy', my brother had already been going to Sydney for three or four years. We travelled by steam train from Cobar. The train would leave Cobar in the morning and arrive in Sydney early the next morning. I had 6 years at High School in Sydney.

I remember some good times at school and as most of the kids were from the 'bush' we had things in common. In between school lessons we learned to play football, cricket and other sports. Mum and Dad would travel to Sydney at Easter and we would go to the Easter Show.

After I left I returned home to work at 'Yarranvale' with my father. Also, I worked in woolsheds around the district. During this time there were some young people in the Nymagee area, so a football team was put together. We played for about three seasons and had our share of wins. The competition was called the 'Lynch Cup' and we played towns like Canbelego, Hermitdale, Coolabah and Byrock. We also played in tennis and cricket competitions.

Every Saturday night there seemed to be a dance on somewhere, if not in Nymagee it would be in Bobadah or Hermitdale. There wasn't any television or internet but we were having a great time.

Memories of a Fund Raising Policeman 1977 - 1980

I arrived at Nymagee in 1977 with my wife Margaret and two children, Angela, aged six, and Andrew, aged four. Margaret was pregnant with our third child, Natalie. The sight of the town did not worry me, I was happy to be in a small community and the topography was not unlike that of Hay where we spent the previous four years. I was immediately impressed with the old police station and residence as we had been living in a small box like house whilst at Hay.

We hadn't been their long when I attended my first Nymagee Progress meeting and the topic on the agenda was the Cobar Aged Nursing Home being sponsored by Lillian Brady. At the meeting I think I was conned by the biggest group of rogues you had ever met, Peter and Shirley Kershaw, Stan and Jill Harland, Barry and Dolly Betts, Bill and Colleen Dillon and Merv and Anne Taylor to name a few. The reason I say this was that they requested I put Angela up as Nymagee's Princess in the fundraiser, no problems I thought, but little did I know what I had let myself in for. I will clarify this point now by saying that the 'rogues gallery' I previously mentioned worked just as hard, if not harder, than I did.

With the challenge set our little group set to raising money. Every conceivable method was used.

- We showed movies in the hall so kindly lent to us by the Cobar RSL, which proved a great attraction, as television was not available.
- The occasional BBQ was lit on the hastily erected facilities opposite the pub; I must admit that it would have to be the biggest BBQ I have ever seen.
- We ran a booth at the Cobar rodeo and had a beaut day only just getting home with the entire tent on the truck.
- A wool drive was organised and many a local threw in some fleeces that the buyer took away for a tidy sum.
- A rabbit shoot was run on a point scoring system, the rabbits went to the chiller and the prize was donated back to the cause, some hearts these guys showed.
- Merv Taylor and I designed and built a 9 hole golf course in the paddock of Les Waters opposite town, mostly for our own use but with refinements we saw approximately 200 golfers turn up for a charity hit with all proceeds back to the cause. Although not at this event my brother-in-law, Gary Lowrey from Armidale, hit his one and only hole-in-one on this course, his prize was a pint of beer and his name in chalk on the pub noticeboard.
- Tom Dunn threw his weight behind a gymkhana at Gilgunnia. He drew a heavy steel rope around a cluster of trees to make the arena and supplied the cattle for the ride. I can't remember the number of cowboys that turned up but I do recall one steer managing to find its way through the metre

wide gap where the rope started and finished, it was last seen careering across the flat with rider still on top. I guess eight seconds is a long time when you have to walk back.

- I suppose my most memorable event was the bottle drive. I don't know who thought of it but we collected empty beer bottles, had to be the current size and shape, and sold them to the man at Hermidale. Blokes brought in their empties and left them in a stockpile at the pub, we went to various locations and collected them until a truck load was there to be put on Peter Kershaw's truck and off to Hermidale I would go. I cannot go past telling of my efforts at Nangebone, the property of Gerry Ambrose. Gerry told me he had a few bottles in the creek bed not far from the woolshed and I could come out and collect them, so off I went with a horse float on the car and my Dad and Harry Griffiths, he lived at the back of town near the church, as passengers. We met Gerry at the sheds and my Dad went with him and Harry and I followed. As we crossed the paddocks I spotted a beer bottle over to the right side of the road so I diverted and picked it up, followed shortly was another on the left and we dutifully moved over and got that one. We followed on for a bit more to crest the little hill and look down into the creek bed, there we saw the biggest pile of bottles imaginable and counting the two we picked up on the track I think we pulled over 9,000 empties out of the pile. This was not a bad number considering we collected 30,814 bottles of which two were full.
- I am remiss; my most memorable event would have to have been trying to call bingo in the old Court House part of my residence on the day Natalie was born. I think that after calling 'legs eleven' and 'two fat ladies' a couple of times I lost my role to the more articulate caller which left me to revel in the arrival of my little girl. I got a lot of support from my fellow residents that night.

At the completion of the fundraising the money was conveyed to Cobar for Lillian Brady to tally and had I forgotten about the cheque in the safe, which I nearly did, Nymagee would not have been the winner. I was a very proud person to stand with my fellow 'rogues' and watch Angela parade down the main street of Cobar on the back of a truck whilst wearing her tiara and sash. Angela said to Margaret 'Did I win because I smiled the nicest Mum', bless her heart. As a footnote to that saga I used that little tiara as a prompt in my speech to Angela at her wedding on the 8th June 2002 - 'Just keep smiling and you will win the world'.

This fundraiser really brought home to me how people in the bush can pull together and realise potential. My 'gallery' never left me out of anything, introducing me to many a fine person and occasion whilst embracing my family like one of theirs. Friends they are to date.

Policing the area was great. The problems encountered by me throughout my career, still going after 31 years, didn't come up in this little metropolis. The family

life was the nucleus of all that went on and no one was left on their own when help or a shoulder to lean on was needed. I could keep myself well occupied with covering the 4,800 square kilometres of my patrol, looking for illegal shooters, those who ventured off the track into the scrub and those who unfortunately had trouble with the roads.

I can recall only one incident that I didn't appreciate and when a person pulls a rifle on you, you could understand, but even this story has a funny side. I didn't know how to get to this little isolated cottage and as my call came through the pub, Merv Taylor showed me how to get there. He certainly showed me how to get out of there too, I just followed his dust.

No doubt I met and befriended more people at Nymagee some 24 years ago and I am sorry if I haven't mentioned your name but let me assure you, your hearts are in the right place and your hands were outstretched ready to be shaken. The town and the people allowed me in three years whilst stationed there to build a beautiful family life, which to this day I still enjoy.

Greg Campbell
Senior Sergeant
NSW Police Force
Transit Police, Campbelltown

Margaret's Memories 1977-1980

My memories of Nymagee do not relate to growing up in the district but rather the three or so years spent living at Nymagee as a result of my husband's occupation as a Police Officer.

I was four months pregnant with our youngest child, Natalie, when we were transferred to Nymagee Police Station. The police station complex and residence was something to behold. The building was 100 years old and carried with it 100 years of red dust, which had settled in the many crevices before I became expert, like everyone else at 'battening down the hatches' for an approaching dust storm and then cleaning up afterwards. I learned to use water sparingly, to appreciate just how precious water is and how reliant this great country is on it for survival. I coped with the intense heat of the long summers, the long distances travelled to obtain the weekly groceries, the journeys undertaken as parents transporting children to sports days and educational events throughout the district, not having a television reception, and not being able to just pop out for a takeaway meal when one wanted a break from the cooking.

Two of our children started school at Nymagee. It was completely safe for Angela (our eldest) to ride her little bike up over the rise and along the track to Nymagee School. Andrew started school 2 years later (also joining his sister and riding his little bike) and he was able to complete a term before we were transferred

from Nymagee to our next station. Being such a small school the children were all good mates and the older ones looked after the younger ones. They all looked out for one another and that is something our children (who are all now in their twenties) remember and talk about.

Whilst living at Nymagee my parents paid us a visit from New Zealand (where I was born and raised). We picked Mum and Dad up from Orange and started our trip back to Nymagee. My mother was already finding the heat hard to handle and by the time we reached Condobolin I think she thought we had reached our destination! However, the best part was yet to come as from then on we travelled mainly on dirt roads stopping occasionally so that Dad could take photos of the scenery and wildlife. I think Mum thought she was going to the end of the earth. Dad on the other hand just loved it and being in the 'outback' typified everything Australian to him. One of the highlights of their stay with us, for Dad, was to be taken for a flight over Nymagee by Robert Machin. Mum and Dad were so taken by the wonderful spirit and warmth of the people and reminisced about their holiday at Nymagee for many, many years.

Apart from the isolation, heat, and other hardships I loved my time living at Nymagee purely and solely because of the people of the Nymagee district. Through their lives they see many strangers coming and going in their district, particularly police and school teachers. Greg and I and our children were welcomed and accepted into the community as soon as we arrived and immediately felt part of the Nymagee district 'family'. The warmth, friendship and generosity extended to us by the people of the Nymagee district is something I will remember and have such wonderful memories of forever.

Thank you - Margaret Campbell

Memories of Days Gone By - Pat Harland (nee Ware)

When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again!

We spoke to Jim as well, and our memories are a bit hazy, in particular we remember going out on the Hermidale Road to meet soldiers returning from the War, Jim thinks it was only one soldier in particular, one of the Hudsons.

My memory is that Pauline on the piano, George on the drums and possibly Dudley and Peter Sloan were the band and were on the back of Dad's truck.

Sunday School in Nymagee

I also have memories of a Sunday School Teacher, I think by the name of Mr Moody (may be Salvation Army) coming to conduct Sunday School in his light plane (which was quite something approximately fifty five years ago). I remember singing the song 'My Cup's Full and Running Over' - 'Jesus First, Myself Last, and Others in Between'.

Nymagee and the Marriott Family - Robert Marriott

My father and mother (being Bob and Myrtle) met in Hollywood Repat Hospital in Perth (1945) while Dad was being rehabilitated after his time as a POW to the Japanese on the Burma Railway.

They were married on 18th November, 1946, and a short time later they went to Malaya where Dad resumed his work at a gold mine at Raub, which was stopped during the war.

They stayed there for about two years until I, Robert Junior, was born on 16th December, 1948. By this time the tropical climate started to take it out on Dad's health due to his three and a half years as a POW. He had many bouts of malaria and Berri Berri, and they decided to return home to Australia in early 1949. It was then that a friend from Dad's younger days by the name of Ben McLernon, had contacted him and encouraged him to come to NSW and Mount Hope, where Ben had a lot of success at copper leaching of old copper mines in the area.

Dad worked for Ben for a while before he decided to take up the lease on the old Nymagee Mine, sometime in late 1950, and that's how the Marriotts came to Nymagee.

Dad came alone at first, as Mum returned to Albury with me to give birth to my brother, Geoffrey, who arrived on 3rd December, 1950. While we were in Albury, Dad stayed at the Metropolitan Hotel, then owned and run by the Rooney family. Dad looked around for a house for us, these were in very short supply and he ended up buying the old Bush Nursing Home. It was a very dilapidated old weatherboard place that had mostly been painted with sump oil. When Mum, myself and newborn baby Geoff arrived in late December 1950 (or early January 1951, I'm not sure) and saw the house, she sat down and cried. Nymagee didn't have power or water and so it was to kerosene lanterns, rainwater tanks that rarely filled, and a toilet out on the common (or so it seemed).

We gradually made a home of it, though there were no luxuries, not like the lavish lifestyle of Malaya. There wasn't much of a garden as water had to be carted from the Government tank. Baths and clothes washing was limited also, due to the lack of water. We bathed once a week and water was heated in the backyard copper.

Dad worked his mine with a little success for a while, digging out copper and lead ore and sending it to Germany. He was doing well enough to employ two men, until someone burnt out his timber supports on the stope. It was too much expense for him to be able to replace it. He had to put off his men (one of whom was Joe Payton) and he had to look for work himself.

On 14th November, 1952, my sister, Ann, was born at Cobar hospital. My brother and I were cared for, while Mum was in hospital, by the Stanford family,

those being Dolly (now Betts), her Granny and her Uncle Bill. When we first moved to Nymagee, Dolly and her cousin Elvie (Kate) Bridle befriended us and our families all became good friends.

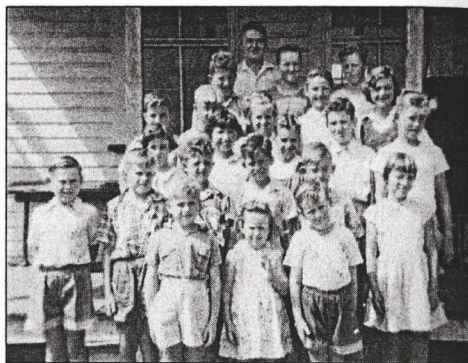
My first day at school was at the then new Public School in 1954. Elvie called and took me there as she used to walk past our house to get to school herself. My first teacher was Don Hyde from Cobar. We went to this school until November, 1962, when we left to go to Mount Hope to live. One of the projects at the school that I can remember well was that we all had to do a Census of the town. There were ninety people and one hundred dogs!

We had visits on occasions from school medical people, the most notable was that of Dr Wern, the school dentist, who struck fear into all and when the tough kids started to scream my heart gained a few more beats. The sight of a treddle powered dentist drill was not pretty! When I was given the 'all clear' it was a great relief.

Dad picked up work around the area doing some wool pressing with Fred Anderson and working on properties with Max Smith (now Stan Harland's place), Ron Keary (now Bruce Harland's) and Ronnie Warner (Darby's Dad). He also worked on the DMR with Toddler Bramston until the Cobar Shire took over, so he went with them on the grader with Paddy O'Hara as his offsider.

Mum, being an ex-army nurse, found herself being called out for advice and help on many occasions when people were sick or there were accidents. She tended to the Kershaw boys a number of times to name some, and became known to Dr Kelly and Cobar ambulance. Ambo boss, Tom Davis, put a big First Aid kit together for her. She did this all on a voluntary basis. The local community was also very helpful, as we found out when our house was burnt down on 5th August, 1958. We lost everything that night and next morning we three kids went to school in full school uniform - offers of help came from everywhere. Mum rang the Post Office to report our fire and Postmaster, Jack Slater, plugged in the whole town and rang them all at once. People came from everywhere. That night Dolly Betts and her Uncle Bill Stanford took us in at their place where we lived for a couple of years.

Dad always had a sugar bag of dynamite and a tin of detonators hanging up in the old shed. Cocky Kershaw knew it was there and when the alarm was raised



Nymagee Primary School - 1955
Roger Mackey, Garry Carson, Frank Harley
Matie Kershaw, Rhonda Dillion, Betty Slater
Maureen Mackey, Pam Hay, Jerry Hay, Carol Mackey
Robert Marriott, Kelvin Wright
Tony Carson, Ann Marriott, Geoff Marriott

about our fire, he made a 'bee line' for it and got it out to safety. The first people there were Roger Mackey and Jack Conley who tried to wake us. People kept sending us clothes and things for months after that, they were all used and very much appreciated by us all.

Dad was camped out near Canbelego that night and Jasper Bridle had to go out and tell him and brought him back to Nymagee. It took us a long time to get over the fire.

Tommy Harland gave us a block of land in town to build a house on, but we never got to do that, so Mum and Dad gave it to the CWA to build on.

Mum ended up with the job of teaching Scripture, to prepare the Anglican kids for their Confirmation and Communion, myself included. We all got involved in building the church, most people in the community had a hand in this, one way or the other. Banjo (Bill) Paterson was the carpenter and donated his services.

Dad left the Shire in about 1960 when a company called VAM Ltd, offered to buy his mine lease. They asked him to work for them to prepare it for copper leaching. All the vats, engine and compressor were installed. A bore hole was put down, with much trouble, they lost the bit a couple of times and had to fish for it. Eventually they got it down to 720 feet. Jim Calagan was the contractor and Pat Slater was his offsider.

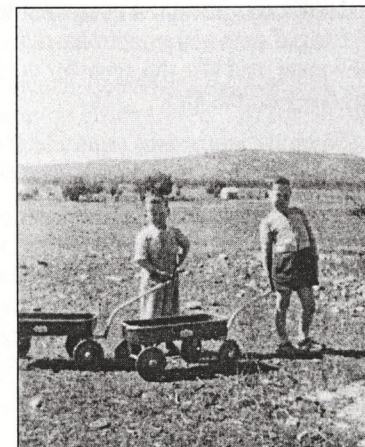
When they set up and started, the compressed air used to blow the water out of the bore. It stirred up too much iron and the whole thing was a failure. They then sent Dad up to Mt Oxide (near Mt Isa) where he set up another mine for them - it was a success. He came home but was not well and it was found that his lungs were 'dusted' and he had to give up his job.

When Dad did the deal with VAM to sell his lease he was offered twenty thousand pounds. He eventually had to take them to court, and ended up with only seven thousand dollars.

We left Nymagee in November, 1962, for Mount Hope. Mum had to become the bread winner and managed the Mount Hope General Store for Ben McLernon when he moved to Cobar.

If Nymagee taught us anything in life it was the sense of value, as things did not come easy BUT I feel it made us better people for it.

Thank you Nymagee.

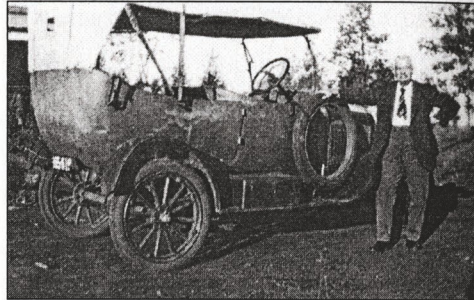


Robert & Geoffrey Marriott
Off to the Bridles shop to collect
the weekly groceries

The Levy Family - Monica Louise Levy (Lu)

Maurice Levy and Louisa Berry were married at 'Hartwood' Station on 5th August 1924 by the Reverend Stanley Drummond (founder of the 'Far West Home'). At the time Mr Wilson was the owner of 'Hartwood'. This was Maurice's second marriage, his first wife Rose (Roset) had died some years before. They had a daughter Ivy who had married Jack Cade and Edward who married Elsie. Ivy had one son Jack, and Edward and Elsie three sons and one daughter, the two older sons both lost their lives during the second war and Ivy's husband died in the first war.

Maurice and Louisa became parents of twin daughters on the 6th July 1926, Monica Louise was born at 2.00 am and Patricia Elizabeth at 3.20 am at the private hospital at Nyngan. The tongues were really wagging as Maurice was then aged 67 years and Louisa 38 years.



Maurice Levy

Monica, or Lu as I am mostly called, is writing this story.

Maurice died on 12th June, 1932, in Nymagee and Louisa on 10th August, 1970. Maurice was born on 3rd September, 1858 and arrived in Nymagee in 1881 when he was 23.

Louisa was a trained nurse and while on holiday staying with Mrs Wilson at 'Hartwood' when she met Maurice. Maurice was a Stock and Station Agent, Auctioneer, and also the Agent for the Sun Alliance Insurance Co and also acted as Caretaker for the Mine.

When we were eight years old Pat was very ill with asthma and the doctors advised that we go to Sydney to live, particularly near the seaside if possible.

What a lovely time Bill Dillon would have had at our clearing sale. Even our dolls were sold and when we arrived in Sydney Mother had to go into the city and buy dolls for us. After some weeks staying with Hugh and Claire Griffiths we went to Mosman to be near Mother's Aunts and cousins. What a traumatic experience for two little country bumpkins going from a one teacher school with about ten pupils to a huge school with thirty or forty teachers and probably 300 to 400 pupils.

All that water that is everywhere in Sydney. After I left school I went to business college for twelve months and then to work, by this time we had moved to Manly to live with Mother's Uncle. I worked for the same firm for twenty five years and by the time I retired from that job I was sick and tired of ferry rides and the harbour.

Imagine all that water here in the west, we would all be living in houseboats.

In 1948 Pat met Len von Schill from Dubbo and they married in 1949 after their marriage they went to Wagga Wagga and had two daughters. Jane was born in 1950 and Anne in 1952. Jane married Graeme Rockliff and they now live at the Gold Coast, Anne married Garry Elder and they live in Wagga.

I have not married. In 1973 we sold our home in Manly and I bought a unit in Mosman at Spit Junction and in the same year Pat and Len bought the Post Office and Exchange at Nymagee. Len, after having a coronary in 1971, was advised by the doctors to make a change so they decided to take a short holiday trip out west and on arriving at Nymagee were told the Post Office was for sale so decided to buy and in January 1973 Len became the Post Master. His health did not improve and in 1975 had a triple by-pass and repairs and again in 1985 went through the same operation. In 1988 he once again finished up at St Vincent's and passed away on the 24th October 1988 before anything could be done for him. Pat kept the Post Office open until June 1991 the exchange had closed in 1987 when Nymagee and surrounding districts were given Automatic Telephone Service (the telephone exchange operated from 1911 to 1987 and the Post Office from 1887 to 1991).

Unfortunately Pat developed Dementia and is in a Nursing Home in Wagga.

At the beginning of this year I sold my home in Nymagee and am now living in Cobar.

Elvia Collins (nee Bridle)

Since being asked to write down some of my memories of growing up in Nymagee so many memories have come back that it's difficult to know where to begin.

At the beginning I suppose! My earliest memories of Nymagee would be as a little girl in the early 1940's, living in a little house in Fishers Street. My parents are Jaspa and Alice Bridle, and they named me Elvia later pronounced Elvie and then called Kate by most of Nymagee.

Where we lived seemed isolated from the main part of Nymagee so we did a lot of walking and later a pushbike. The only vehicle was an old Chevrolet car which dad had to use to get to his work shearing and other casual farm work or rabbit trapping. Later on a ute was bought.

When dad stayed away through the week mum and I would walk up to Gran Stanford's to sleep every night. Gran lived with mum's brother Bill, her sister Nellie and my cousin Dolly. Their house was about halfway between our house and the rest of Nymagee.

For many years there was no school building, so school was held in the Courthouse when I began school and the teacher Mr Cox lived in the Police house (don't know where the policeman lived, or if there was any).

Between school at the Courthouse and the present school, school was held in a room off the otherwise uninhabited old Convent building and then for a while in the Catholic Church.

Mum and Nellie milked cows and we sold milk, which Dolly and I delivered on our pushbikes before school. This didn't last very long with me dropping glass bottles and breaking them and Dolly telling people 'to make their own kids come and get the milk'.

The only neighbour we had was Ted Coleman, he lived by himself in a little old hut. And next to Gran was Mr and Mrs Bill Wright, so when Marriott's - Myrtle, Bob, Robert and Geoff (and later Ann was born) came to live in a disused house not far away, in about 1950, it was very exciting. They had a telephone and we didn't. People could phone us at Marriott's and on a clear day if the wind blew the right way Mrs Marriott would blow a whistle to get our attention and we would go and get the message. They became wonderful friends and when their house burned down went to live with Uncle Bill.

As children we never were bored, we had our jobs to do but there was always time for play and fun. Dad built a little corrugated iron cubby house and Colleen, Dolly, Zillah and Barbara and anybody else could come and play. Then there was always hopscotch, cards, board games, bushwalking and tennis. Our tennis court was a flat piece of land about the size of a normal tennis court next to Gran's house. We had a net but three sides wasn't fenced so we spent a lot of time chasing balls down the hill if we missed them.

Water was always very precious so washing was a big event on Mondays. We heated water for a bath by putting buckets on the stove and carrying them to the bathtub, it wasn't always a daily event. When fresh water became scarce, water was carted from the government tank and cleared with alum for washing, etc.

The toilet was a pit some distance from the house with a woodheap in between, the idea being to take wood back for the stove after going to the toilet.

There was always a shortage of fresh meat but wonders could be done with canned meat, Gran could make a delicious curry using Campie.

Nellie was an accomplished sewer and sewed for all of us and lot of Nymagee people paid her to sew. After the war she sent away and bought a parachute. It was a challenge all little pieces that had to be unpicked, I can't remember what was made out of it if anything but remember helping with the unpicking.

Fresh bread was baked by Dudley Wright, all black on top but so yummy. When the two big loaves were pulled apart, you just had to level them off and eat the bits poking out.

Lunchtime we would go home from school and listen to 'Blue Hills' on the radio.

On Friday night the mail truck would bring (amongst other things) icecreams in little cardboard buckets packed in canvas bags in hot ice. Payton's shop would sell them. We would queue up for them. If they weren't all sold they would be wasted when the ice melted (that didn't happen very often).

Uncle George, our really trendy Uncle from Sydney, would come to visit with his Vauxhall car with its dicky seat and take us for rides.

Most of our medical needs were attended to by Mrs McKinnon and later on Mrs Marriott who were nurses. I am sure they weren't paid for their services but were always available for anyone who needed them until, if needed, we could get to Cobar or Nyngan to a doctor.

We had a blue cattle dog, who I think was supposed to take care of mum and I when dad was away. One night while we were staying up at Gran's an intruder came to our house. Next morning when we went home there was blood on our verandah from Blue attacking him (no he didn't sue him). Blue could also round up turkeys which we kept. Bringing them home, sorting out ours from Gran's (it's true).

Our mail was collected from the Post Office on Monday, Wednesday's and Friday nights.

If we went to Sydney or Dubbo we would go in the mail truck with Bill Gudgeon to Hermidale and then on the steam train. The whole trip to Sydney took a day and a half.

Travelling country western shows would come to town sometimes, also movies. The day after the Buddy Williams show was there the old hall burnt down. The present hall was built with lots of fundraising and voluntary labour - Bill Hodge being one of the main builders.

We looked forward each year to going to the Nyngan and Cobar shows.

I went to boarding school in Dubbo in 1954 and 1955. About this time Mum and Dad moved from Fishers Street to what was to become 'Bridle's Shop' in Graham Street, with the help of Dolly and many friends they built it up from an empty shop to a well stocked general store. When I came home from school I worked there until the shop was sold in 1965 and we moved away, sadly for me leaving behind many friends.

With the move to the shop came the opportunity to meet and make friends with so many people. We were never lonely. Social life was wonderful. A Youth Club was formed and we would organise dances to be held in the hall. When there wasn't a dance in the hall we would travel to Canbelego, Mount Hope, Bobadah, Cobar or Hermidale for dances and balls. Cobar for movies.

I was known as the local bush hairdresser, my salon was usually out in the backyard behind the shop.

Ivor Hamilton drove us whenever we asked him in his car (see photo), Ivor and his sister Zillah and their mother also for many years provided a room for young people to play table tennis. This became a popular meeting place.

Frank Mahy's mother always baked us a whole square biscuit tin of scones, about six dozen, all exactly the same size, whenever we had a dance and everyone else brought along cakes or food of some kind.

At 'The Peak', about 5 kms from Nymagee, Ethel and Bill Hodge let us form a tennis club and Bill built three tennis courts, where young people could play tennis (old people could play too). Many happy days were spent there including bonfires and parties at night.

There was always plenty of rabbits around Nymagee and they became a source of income for many people with chillers scattered around and trucks going to pick up rabbits from people who camped out and bringing them back to the main chiller at Nymagee. When the rabbit plague was on fences were put around tanks with a funnel of netting going into the tank so the rabbits would go in for a drink and couldn't get out.

We played cards and listened to music at the same time. The music was a windup gramophone and somebody had to miss out on cards in their turn to wind the gramophone.

The radio was a very large piece of furniture with six volt battery to run it. There always had to be a spare charged up battery on hand when the one in use went flat.

Saturday afternoons for a few years in early 60's Nymagee had a very well patronised Rifle Club up near the Sugar Loaf.

Some of the people who come readily to mind for whatever the reason are:

Ethel and Bill Hodge - who did so much for everyone.

Alex Storey - for his music, organising the football side and work with many organizations.



The Bush Hairdresser



Elvie Bridle & Zillah Hamilton

Toddler Bramston (was that his real name?) and Cocky (Arthur) Kershaw, they were the local road gang.

Dick Bramston - everybody's friend, but only ever owned one pair of socks at any one time. Threw away the old ones when he bought a new pair.

Donald and Mrs Murchison, they worked for Ken McKinnon and lived in the old hospital, and Mrs Murchison would sit in a trailer pulled by a Ferguson Tractor driven by Donald when they came to do their shopping.

Pauline and George Pusell who were our competition for customers in the shop but also they played wonderful music for our dances.

Victor Clarke, who would come to town, drink a lot of grog, make himself very sick and very broke and go back to work to make some more money so he could do it all again.

Jack Little was the local boot and shoe repairer for many years.

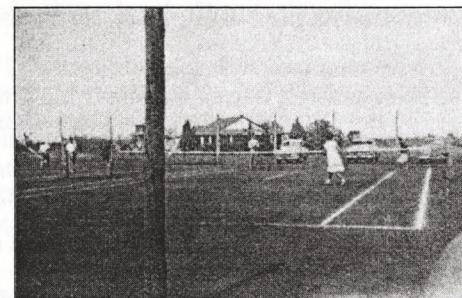
The Slater Family in the Post Office and working the telephone exchange with never a complaint.

The Rooneys and the McKinnons in the Hotel.

The many policemen and school teachers who came and went whose names I can't remember all of them. Jack Ashman who was the teacher who thought he'd taught me to drive a car and then sent me along to the police station for a test for a licence. When asked to reverse through the gateway I knocked the post over. The kindly policeman gave me a licence and sent me home to practice reversing.

The people of Nymagee were always hoping the mine would work again and different mining companies over the years came and went and tried different methods but without success so the population hasn't increased greatly. In about 1960 some local children did their own census and found the dogs outnumbered the humans, being 90 dogs and 69 people (approximately).

Thank you Nymagee for my childhood and teenage memories and thank you Dolly for the opportunity to write some of them down.



The Peak Tennis Club



Roger Mackey, Blondie Harwick & Ian Neadry at The Peak Tennis

North, South, East or West - Carmen Gordon

I have never had much sense of direction. I knew where east was when the sun was rising and west when it was setting but at other times did not have a clue.

Joan and Mabel Dunne, Monica and myself set off from Gilbert Park just after lunch to go to the creek bed to get a load of sand for the garden. After we loaded the sand on, we could not get the car going. So the four of us set off for home.

When we reached the tank in the paddock I decided that the other three should rest in the shade and I would walk back to the homestead to get help. Joan gave me clear instructions of how to get home. Just go over the bank of the tank and follow the power line and it will take you right to the house.

Well nothing could go wrong with those instructions. I went over the bank of the tank and followed the road to where the power lines were - BUT Joan forgot to tell me which of the three lines I was to follow as this was a T junction.

Well, me with my good sense of directions thought that I should follow this particular one as I worked out where the sun came up and where it was going down.

I had thoughts of how brave I was walking in the bush all on my own as I was scared of the bush and did not find it friendly. I thought how proud Bill, my husband, would be when I returned to the house so he could go and pick up Mabel, Joan and Monica in the car.

It was very hot and I could hear animals all around me and every other noise that my imagination heard.

Hey what's this, Joan did not tell me I would come to a fence. Well which way should I go? I knew that I would have to follow the fence till I came to the gate, as it would be quicker.

Should I go right or should I go left? Well I've come from that direction so the gate must be in front of me so I should go left.

I went left and followed the fence, by now the sun was sinking and I was starting to get scared that I would be out here alone in the night. (Still at 56 years I sleep with a 25w light on every night). There seemed to be more noises and coming from every direction. What would I do if I walked into some cows? Should I walk around them? Will they come at me? Are they the tame ones or are they those wild ones that they had in the yard a couple of months back? What if they are pigs?

I started to run as I had got myself worked up at this time. But I got a stitch in my side and had to walk again. But at least the noises were quieter.

It was now getting on towards dusk and still I had not come to the gate. I knew the gate was only a short distance from the homestead so I kept on hoping that before it got to dark I would be there.

Then in the distance, just after the sun went down, I heard a car. I really started to run then towards the sound.

Then in the distance I thought I saw the gate and at the same time saw car lights coming towards the gate. I ran and shouted for all I was worth.

As Bill got to the gate so did I. I started to tell him that Joan, Mabel and Monica were still back at the tank and to hurry and get them as they must be getting worried. Bill told me to jump in and he would take me back to the homestead as Joan, Mabel and Monica were there.

After I had left them and was not back within the hour they started for home and raised the alarm that I was out in the bush.

Boy was I glad to be there but was I also embarrassed about Bill having to come looking for 'me', who was going to save everyone.

It turned out that instead of walking three quarters of a mile to the gate I had walked right around the paddock which was about eight miles.

When I got out of the car at the Homestead my feet were very sore and when I took off my shoes I had blisters on the soles of my feet. I did not do much walking for the next week and have never tried to rescue anyone again.

Pig and I - Carmen Gordon

I commenced my married life at 'Geandale', 34 km from Nymagee, in March 1964.

The homestead had been empty for over three years, as 'Geandale' was run in conjunction with 'Burra' Station, owned by Jack and Norma Langford.

The drought was well established, and feed was scarce for domestic as well as wild animals. The boxes that we had stored our goods in were packed on the verandah and some mornings we would notice the sides of the boxes eaten away. We discovered that the kangaroos were the ones doing the damage.

In the first four months we were at 'Geandale' we destroyed over 300 pigs.

The outhouse was about 200 metres from the house and yard with no shade.

Bill would leave about 7.30 am to go to 'Burra' to scrub cut for the cattle every second day. This morning I walked out to the gate with Bill then got the gun to go to the toilet as pigs would roam around the fence.

As I came out of the toilet I saw the pig only a short distance from the toilet. I had only used a gun about three or four times and was not real keen to try it now. I shouted at the pig. Tried to find stones to throw at it but every time I opened the door it would come closer. After this went on for quite a while I sat and waited for it to move off. It did not. Then I tried to shoot it but it did not go down. I emptied

the magazine into it and around it. I heard some of the bullets hit but every time I went to go out the pig would come for me. I kept the door shut. As the sun got hotter it got hotter in the toilet.

This went on for some hours. Monica, our baby, was in the cot in the house on her own. Luckily I had changed her and given her a bottle before I came to the toilet.

I did not know what time of day it was but I did know it was darn hot stuck in that toilet.

Then in the distance I heard the engine of a motorbike and hoped help was on the way.

When the bike pulled up I called out to Bill who noticed the pig a short distance from the toilet. He came over towards the toilet and the pig started towards him and fell over dead.

Lucky for Monica and me that he came home early that day as I had spent just over seven and a half hours in that darn hot toilet.

The Intruder - Carmen Gordon

'Kallala' homestead used to be a stop over place in the early settlement times. At the time I lived there back in 1966 the front four rooms were our bedrooms and they were made of mud bricks. That part of the house was always lovely and cool and seemed to be so warm in the winter.

The kitchen, dining and lounge were built at a much later date and they were corrugated iron inside and out. The ceilings were high and in the dining room was a wooden stove with two small glass windows on either side of the chimney.

The kitchen was behind the dining area and loungeroom and that's where the electric stove, sink, cupboards were.

Down another step to the bathroom and laundry with the meat house next door.

I have always had a good imagination and this night Bill was late getting back from helping his cousin Sam with some sheep work at Priory Tank.

I walked past the old stove and in one of the small windows I saw the V of a man's jumper. I kept going into the kitchen but the curtains were drawn and I could not see out. I was scared. Oh, what should I do? I did not want him to know that I had spotted him so I crawled past the stove and under another window and reached the telephone and rang my neighbour, Joan Dunne, about 1 mile away at Gilbert Park. When I heard Joan's voice I started to cry and in a quiet voice tried to tell her someone was out on my side verandah.

It seemed like ages before I heard her car but it was only a matter of minutes she tells me.

Her and Mabel came in the back door and found me crying, huddled under the phone shelf. Joan, in her forthright way, wanted to know what the fuss was about. I tried to explain so she looked in the small window then started to go on to the side verandah. I tried to stop her, telling her she could get hurt. This did not stop her and she kept on going.

Then she called out for me to go to her and boy was I scared, but I went and she showed me the man looking through the window. I had hung a jumper of Bill's on the verandah line and it was the V of the jumper showing through the window.

Never did I leave any clothes on that line of a night after that.

Unusual Garden - Carmen Gordon

While at Kallala I decided to put in a vegetable garden. They had one at Gilbert Park, also fruit trees, and it was delicious eating fresh vegetables and fruit straight from the garden.

Joan Dunne was a founding member of the present Nymagee CWA and she got me interested in CWA. We went in every month and whenever there was anything that CWA was doing, like organising the Nymagee Christmas Party for all children of the district. Catering for functions, holding fundraising functions, including dances and cabarets, holding Nymagee Flower Show, which is still going strong today.

I thought that I would grow some vegetables to enter at the Nymagee Flower Show.

Bill and I prepared the beds. Put plenty of manure in, as there was an abundance available. Read Yates Garden Book to work out what vegetables needed to be planted for the Flower Show. Bought packets of seeds in Cobar when we went in for supplies. Bill made up the seedbeds and planted the seeds.

I looked after them and when big enough I transplanted the lot. There was a three metre bed of tomatoes, beetroot, carrots, parsnips and turnips, also cabbage and lettuce.

I looked after them for weeks and the tomatoes were terrific bearers. Came towards the show week and I picked the first of the carrots to see what they were like. I pulled the first carrot and it snapped, then another and another, they all snapped off. I asked Bill why they were breaking and after he dug in the ground we found these beautiful spiral vegetables.

When I had transplanted them I just put them willy nilly in the ground and that was how they grew. Beautiful thick ripe spiral vegetables. Good to eat but no good to be entered in the Vegetable Section of the Nymagee Flower Show.

I now grow all root vegetables direct into the bed and if I do transplant any I make sure I have a straight hole in the ground for the roots to go into.

A Nymagee Policeman 1930 - Bill Rooney

Around 1930 a Police Constable was sent to Nymagee, and his name was Cecil Marsh. He had a wife Thelma, and baby son Bruce, and lived in the present police station for a number of years, before being transferred to Woolgoolga, on the north coast.

I believe he was an officer in the AIF in WW1 and served again in the AIF as an officer in WW2.

Back to Nymagee - he became very involved in the town's community life and was a very generous official in handing out dole certificates to the large numbers of workers who were walking through the State in search of work. This resulted in quite a few settling in town and some remained for many years, and reared their families and stayed. He was a splendid horseman and had many horses in the adjoining police paddock. On our way home from school we used to watch in awe as he broke in horses for the saddle and his sulky, and two in hand, and he had a great competition with the wonderful horse lady Mrs Harry Crow (if he bit the dust we never saw it) (as an aside Mrs Crow used to come to town in her beautiful polished sulky and pony, or her two in hand, and shortly after the Constable would parade through town in one of his best).

He played an occasional game in the football team, but admitted that they seemed to tackle him heavier than the others so withdrew. No cricket or tennis, but unstoppable in the dance orchestras. He had an enormous stock of band instruments and joined Mrs Phil Betts (piano), Lily Bodmer (violin), Reg Harland (banjo), young George Pusell (drums), Vincent Bright (violin), and later Pauline Pusell (piano), with his outrageous performances on his beloved trombone (he called it the sliding cow). When he ran out of breath he swapped over to the drums. He certainly gave the dances a lift. He had an occasional break to referee the odd fight.

He seemed deflated when the department gave him a motorcycle and sidecar (what, no horse!!). As kids we were always welcome at the police station, and had a run of the house, using his musical instruments, eating Mrs Marsh's cakes, locking each other in the pen. One day in memory she was downtown, and he was cleaning out the cells, and I slipped the bolt and went home. She found him 3 hours later slightly distressed. This is the first time I have admitted this only because I think he may be gone.



We never heard of him locking anyone up.

The photo was taken of Constable Cecil Marsh and his son Bruce in 1930, at the Nymagee Police Station. I believe the brown police uniform was the dress of the NSW Mounted Police. At the time his major transport was by horse, and horse drawn sulky. He later was issued with a motorbike and sidecar.

My Mum and Dad

Written by Warren Rostron, Stanmore, Queensland

My Mum was a McLean, Dorothy, or Doris as they called her. She was born in Nymagee about 1899.

Doris had three brothers; Dick, Ebonezer and Ernie, and two sisters: Anne and Gladys. Grandfather McLean arrived in Nymagee looking for gold, after the Bendigo rush. He met up with Emma Jane Milledge whom he married. There they settled down and had the family.

Dick McLean carried out a hardware business in Nymagee, whilst Ebonezer had a butcher shop.

My mum met up with a Rob Rostron, who was a station hand on Eremeran Station, a very large holding at the time. They were married in Warren in the early 'twenties'.

My brothers, myself and other station hand kids had a private teacher to educate us. Her name was Miss Cuff, and she would "cuff" you under the ear if you did wrong - cuff by nature.

At Eremeran we had the school, and a store but were 60 miles from anywhere with only a horse and sulky.

No refrigeration, only the coolers - coal inside tinsplate walls that had to be fed with dripping water. Or a cooler that consisted of a frame with gauze around it also fed by dripping water down the sides. Usually strips of towelling were used to place in the tank to syphon the water down the sides. All were very effective - home made butter set like a rock. It was one of us kids job to make sure that the water tanks on top of the coolers were kept full.

It wasn't until at the age of five, when we visited Uncle Harry and Aunt Alice (Uncle Harry drew a War Soldiers settlers block, which he called "Iris Vale", about 17 miles west of Nymagee), that I found out there was such a thing as a refrigerator. We were offered some Ice Blocks (water) and I was most surprised where Aunt Alice got them from. Then she showed me my first refrigerator.

One particular day, Aunt Alice had some relations up from the city. The kids were playing down in the yard, when all of a sudden, one comes screaming up to the house "Aunty, Aunty, I have just killed an emu!. Aunt Alice looked bewildered and said "That's not an Emu, that's my pet turkey!"

Patricia Hogan

I am an old Nymagee resident, one of my grandparents on my mum's side was born in Nymagee, along with my parents.

I was born in Nyngan but lived in Nymagee until I was eleven years old.

My grandparents were Frank and Elizabeth Harland and my parents were Ada and Walter Mackey.

The Harland and Mackey's were well represented around the district.

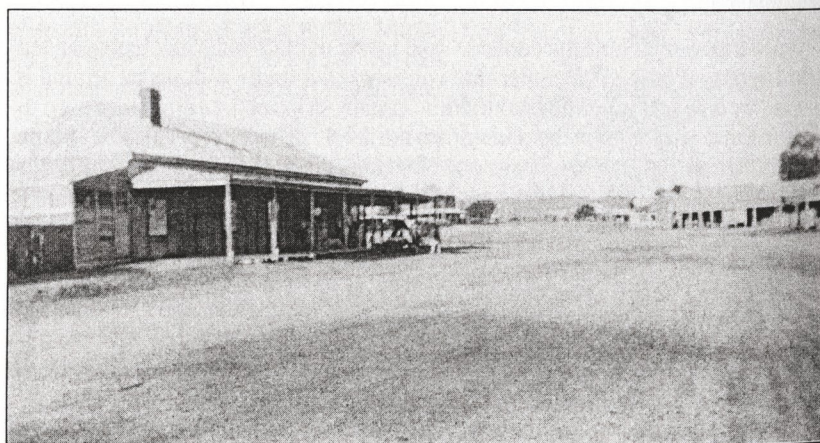
The last time I was in Nymagee would be about two years ago and my grandparents' house was still standing, just up from the cricket ground. We would often wander back, my sons love the place but I cannot believe how things have gone. Our house was between the town centre and the Post Office.

The School I went to has gone and all the shops in the main street opposite to the pub.

I remember when Dick McClean had the grocery shop and his brother had the butchers, which is still there today.

I also remember the old dance hall, they used to have great balls there when we were kids. The adults had the big night on Friday and Saturday we went along with the adults and had a great time. That's where a lot of us learned to dance. There was a lady who worked at the hotel which was run by the Rooney family then, her name was Mrs Carr and she used to get us up to dance and it was great fun.

I remember a lot of young men that came to Nymagee when the depression was on. A lot stayed on and married local girls.



Nymagee 1935

Fire in the Loo! - June O'Donnell

My memory of Nymagee took place in the late 1950's. I was nursing at the Cobar District Hospital at the time, when Pam Hay came to work there from Nymagee. We were actually related on the Roach side of my family but hadn't met funnily enough, and we soon became friends as well as workmates.

Soon after this Pam's brother Barry was to celebrate his 21st Birthday with a party at the Nymagee Hall and I, as well as Pam, was invited. We were to drive over there with Pam's Grandfather, Ernie Mackey and stay with Pam's Mum at 'Coree' for the weekend.

The week before the event it rained and it rained and it rained. The road to Nymagee was flooded and we thought that was it! We wouldn't be going, but Ernie said he was willing to give it a go and try and get through if we were game. No one really expected us to get through and thought we were fools to try. Well, that trip was memorable in itself. I remember Pam and I walking along in front of Ernie's little utility (I can't remember the make but it was quite small), up to our knees in water and even higher at times, to make sure he stayed on the road as there was a sea of water as far as the eye could see in places.

We eventually came to a creek and could see where a car that had tried to cross had been washed downstream. We did manage to get across safely and all I could say about that was 'three cheers for Ernie's little ute'. We finally arrived at Pam's Mum's, safe and sound.

The next morning we were asked to go out and pick some mushrooms for breakfast. I had never seen so many mushrooms before. They were popping up everywhere after all the rain. The only problem was we were asked to cook them as well! Neither one of us had a clue how to cook them, the only cooking I'd ever done was at school and that didn't include mushrooms. I can still remember vividly, the aroma of those mushrooms cooking but I certainly can't remember what they tasted like. I do, however, remember the look of exasperation on Pam's Mum's face (I've worn that same look myself many times, at some of the things my own teenagers had done).

We arrived at the hall that night for the party dressed in our finery and I distinctly remember feeling like an outsider as I didn't know anyone and it seemed to me that they weren't interested in knowing me.

Halfway through the night I needed to go to the Loo so asked Pam to show me where it was. We went outside through the kitchen, picking up a box of matches on the way to show the way. Well, that loo was a very neglected Long-Drop and in the pitch dark there was no way I was going to sit on it without some light. There were old newspapers everywhere as well as spider webs. I might add by this time I was getting desperate to go. Pam suggested that I roll some newspaper up and light it. This I did and what I saw didn't convince me that I had nothing to worry

about as far as spiders were concerned. I was so busy looking in every corner and down the hole, I didn't notice the newspaper had burnt down until it burnt my hand. It was such a shock I threw it down the hole and it kept burning so I thought I'd be right to use the loo at this stage as there was light coming from the hole, at least.

Before I could do anything it flared up and flames were coming up through the hole and Pam was yelling at me to wee on it and splitting her sides with laughter all the while. Wee on it indeed! That loo couldn't have been used for a very long time as there was so much dry newspaper in it and there was no way I was going to wee on it. It was becoming quite an inferno by this time, with flames leaping out of the hole. I convinced Pam to run into the kitchen and get some water. By the time she returned with it, the fire had abated (I guess all the newspaper had burnt by this time) and we were able to extinguish it. After all the excitement I ended up going behind the loo to do what I needed to do and I could finally laugh about it.

I remember Jack Slater coming outside to see what all the commotion was about. He later did a write up for the Cobar paper on the Birthday Celebration in which he stated - Owing to the quick thinking of two Cobar Nurses, a fire was averted (or words to that effect).

I don't have any distinct memories of that weekend other than the flooded road, the aroma of those mushrooms and of course the FIRE IN THE LOO!

My Happiest Memories of Nymagee

Rhonda Anne Dunne (now Eagling)

I, Rhonda Anne Dunne (now Eagling), was born in 1940, Cobar Hospital. The fourth of five children to Margarite and Harry Dunne of 'Osterley Downs'.

As children we spent many happy times and holidays at our grandparents, Anne and George Hutchins, of 'Keighrans', Nymagee.

As we grew older we used to attend Church at Shuttleton. Later played tennis and have supper in the evenings. Then Aunt Dolly and Pearl Betts would play the piano. We would have a great night dancing. Many people were there from all around the district.

Some of my best memories were of Reg and Carol Hudson. When I was about sixteen Carol made my first dance frock, a beautiful tangerine, and a tennis outfit. They used to take me to the Nymagee dances in the big hall where I met young people of my own age. Reg and Carol taught me to play tennis and would invite the young people out to 'Yaroma' for tennis days.

Carol was a great cook, I still remember her showing me how to bake my first cake.

These are some of my happiest memories of Nymagee.

Shirley Kershaw Stories

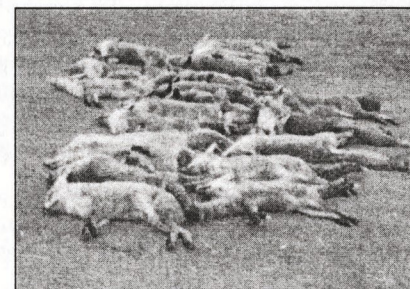
Bob and Annie Harley were married at Mianetta on 28/9/1935. Annie Maud Read was born in Nymagee in 1913 she died in 1970. Robert Harley was born at Bobadah in 1906. They had two children Shirley and Frank. Robert, better known as Bob was a shearing contractor and Annie was the cook for many years. Bob was also known as RT.

Shirley married Peter Kershaw on 28/10/58.

RT and Bill Hodge, (better known as Hodgie) Peter and myself went to rob a beehive. We walked to where the hive was in the tree, after the tree was cut down the bees became very savage, RT was told to get some green bushes to burn so the smoke would quieten the bees. RT drove in a wide circle looking for the bushes, there was no shortage of green bushes but RT could not find the 'right kind'. When

he finally came back it was too late - the hive had been robbed.

RT loved fox hunting in his old moke, a canvas topped jeep with no doors. He sometimes took his granddaughter Marcia to help, he would drag the dead roo behind the moke for a trail. Marcia called out, "Far (RT) roo roo!" RT said "What! I never saw a roo. Where was it!"? No, no" said Marcia, "the one we were dragging, we have lost it!" Early in the morning, after breakfast, RT would say, "Lets go and skin the foxes", which could be up to 40, he would have everyone working while he looked on.



Foxes to be skinned

RT and Ray Maddison had been to Mount Hope for a 'few beers' and they were on their way home in the old 'moke' with the hood all torn and flapping, and a tarp loosely tied over the top, and it had coke bottles for blinker light covers! RT and Ray were all rugged up in winter gear, ugg boots, over coats and balaclavas and all covered in dust - they were suddenly pulled up by the police. The policeman said, "Where are you going boys?" "Going home to Nymagee", was the reply. All the policemen could say was "On your way boys", he just waved them off on their way - he must have thought the paper work would have been too much!

RT and Annie were going to Mount Hope for a dance, they were driving a black Morris and it broke down on the way, so they got a lift to the dance. After the dance, Pauline and George Pusell brought them back to where their car was broke down. George said "Here she is RT, what are you going to do?" RT's sleepy reply was "I would not think of towing her until daylight". RT did not realise that the sun had been up for an hour or more!

I remember my younger life in the shearing sheds as Dad was a shearing contractor, and had many sheds around the district. These sheds followed on from one another, so we lived in huts on the properties for many months.

When I was about 7 we were shearing at Nimagee Station. Ron Warner had a steam engine to drive the overhead gear, the steam engine had to be fuelled with wood.

I spent lots of time in the shed with Dad and playing with the sheep. But when I started to play with the handpieces I was in TROUBLE! Ron was wild, he told Dad if he didn't take me to the hut to Mum, he would flog me. I had undone the screws on the handpiece, and filled the handpiece up with sand...

I can remember times at Glengarry (owned by Oss Machin). In those days you turned off to Glengarry on the Hermidale Road. I remember tramps and swaggies walking down the roads, they often walked down the property tracks, they carried a sugar bag, hoping for food or a job.

At Overton (owned by Frank and Aggie Weston), I was playing in the sheep yards at shearing time. I jumped over the 'counting out' pens onto a rusty nail. Jaspa Bridle carried me down to the homestead. My foot was put into a dish of water and then 'red hot' coals from the fire were added to the water!! Despite the treatment, or maybe because of it, my foot didn't become infected.

Whooping cough was around the area at this time and I caught it from someone. I was treated by The Flying Doctor who came to Nymagee. He used to land in a nearby paddock, although I don't remember how often he came.

My memories of being a Councillor on the Cobar Shire, representing Nymagee and district are happy ones. I was a councillor for 15 years - October 1971 to September 1977 and again - October 1978 to October 1987. There were miles and miles of travelling, but I made many new friends from my involvement with council. During my time on council I saw many changes and happenings in Nymagee; the tennis court lights, toilet block, lining in the hall, aerodrome. The Centenary was a major long running event, I was secretary of the Nymagee Progress Association at the time. We had planned the celebrations for some time but when it came closer I asked Michael Nicholson who would be the secretary for the centenary. He said we are going to have the same secretary - you are doing it! Well, I did my best BUT if I had to do it ever again I would now know what to do. When I started I knew absolutely nothing about celebrating 100 years in a village, but I did enjoy it very much.

During the centenary celebrations we entertained the State Treasurer, Mr. Jack Renshaw and his wife, as well as many old Nymagee-ites, at our home. Peter and I slept on the sewing room floor on the night of the Centenary Ball because we had about 20 people stay.

In 1962 I remember going to Collierina Hall for a Far Western Group conference of CWA with Joan Dunne. We were supposed to ask for permission to re-open a

branch in Nymagee. The conference was very late starting because the guest speaker (I think she was going to speak about isolated children), had misunderstood her directions and went to the Collierina the other side of Bourke!!

Many years later Nymagee was to hold the Far Western Group Conference. I can remember gathering wild creepers from The Gap to decorate the hall, which wasn't lined at that stage. With lots of flowers and hard work the hall looked great on the day. It was that night that things went wrong...

The State President of CWA and her husband were to stay with us on the night of the Conference. Bill Hodge was living with us at the time, as well as Spot Reardon (I seemed to have adopted him from Jessie Dunne). Bill and Spot were in their 70's then, and couldn't do enough to help you.

After the dinner that night, Peter and I took our guests home, we travelled ahead and arrived first to get the lights on and make tea/coffee, BUT 'low and behold', who had arrived before us but Spot and Bill, to light the combustion stove. It had gone out, so to hurry things up they threw on some kerosene, and of course this exploded and blew the ashes everywhere. So we were greeted with a covering of grey ash all over the kitchen. They were very busy trying to clean it up but they needed more time than they had!!! I had spent many hours cleaning up for my 'very important' guests that we were honoured to have.

I was President of the Nymagee Branch when the Country Women of the World's flag came through. The flag had travelled from London, all around the world and we were lucky to have it come through Nymagee.

I also have memories of holding meetings in our homes before we built the Rest Rooms.

Over the years, through drought and recession Nymagee has always managed to hold their Annual Flower Show and Exhibition, and has always been a success.

One bush emergency I will always remember involved our neighbour Eric Harland, on the 20th October, 1981.

Eric was bailing hay and he had just changed the guillotine on the bailer. He got off the tractor to check the bailer out because it seemed to have blocked up! Not thinking, he put his hand in to clear the straw away when the guillotine fell and cut his hand off. It was bleeding so badly that he took off his shirt and singlet and wrapped them around his arm, then used the lace out of his boot the tie on his wrist to stop the bleeding. He then walked to his jeep (which he had to start with a crank handle!) and then he drove himself back to the homestead.

He walked in and his wife was so shocked that she immediately rang me on our party line. Before my father and I drove up to Eric's I contacted the Post Office in Nymagee and they called the ambulance and local police.

I wrapped his arm in a sheet I had in the car, and then met the Nymagee policeman, Constable Bruce Moon, along the road. Constable Moon said he would

take Eric to meet the ambulance. He asked me to go back and find Eric's hand, pack it in ice and take it to Cobar.

I found the hand in the straw, all dirty and flies buzzing around, I could not think what to wrap it in, so I took off my half-slip petty coat and wrapped it in that.

I went to the Nymagee hotel and got some ice and plastic bags and then started off for Cobar. Constable Moon was on his way back after meeting the ambulance, he then took the hand from me. He said he would take the hand to Cobar, as it had to be on the air ambulance with Eric.

Miraculously, today Eric's hand is great. He plays tennis, works on his property and has full use of his hand.

Joseph Whyte and Brothers James, Henry, Charles, Walter, Robert, Jack (2 dec) by D Markham, Spring Hill

Canbelego - Hermidale - Nymagee - Cobar - Mt. Boppy

Joseph Whyte (my father) was born at Rosebank, The Rock, via Wagga in 1887. Parents: James Whyte and Emma Mott, owned a dairy farm at The Rock, Wagga, NSW.

It is not known when the family arrived at Canbelego, but were early settlers. The last brother, Jack, was born in 1902 in Canbelego.

Dad and his brothers had horses and were wood carters, shearers, miners, wood cutters and anything around the districts.

He married Snowetta Mildred Houghton in 1912 at Canbelego (parents John Percy Houghton and Ellen Lintern married 1893, both of Paddington area of Sydney). They also had a second daughter Jessie Nellie Priscilla. They lived next door to the Whytes and both girls attended the Public School at Canbelego.

My mother's best friend was Elsie Wall and always spoke of her fondly.

Charles Whyte owned the bakery and shop at Hermidale.

Jack Hayes had the Canbelego picture show, was also a baker and taught my Uncle Charlie. Jack Whyte helped in the bakery and picture show. Jack Hayes later sold out and went to Kandos where he started a picture show. I remember him well, when I went to the pictures. He visited us often.

Jack also went to Kandos and helped Jack Hayes and worked at the cement works. He married Daisy Hodge of Kandos. He died in 1942 of pneumonia.

Dad's mother, Emma, gave one of her boys a polished apple when living at Nymagee. They found him tragically drowned at Kangaroo Springs, with the apple

still clutched in his hand. My grandmother kept it until she died.

Robert White, at about age 23, died of measles. Times were tragic and so very hard.

Jessie Houghton married a William White of Canowindra. He was a miner at Cobar at the time - 1911.

John Houghton or 'Dave' was a plasterer. His work can still be seen at Kandos and Rylstone to this day. He worked at the Cobar mine along with my Dad, Joseph Whyte and brothers, at different times.

Dad was also a fireman at Mt. Boppy mine for 5 years. For the last 2 of these years his duty was to be in charge of 5 large Babcock Water Tube boilers of 1,300 horse-power. From here he went to Kandos with our mother and 4 children - Joseph, Herbert, Pearl and Ellen. They had 4 more girls. He died in 1967 aged 80, Mother died in 1992 aged 97.

Joseph Whyte's sons Herbert and Joseph were well known around the area. Herbert was at Hermidale working with Uncle Charlie at baking bread and other work. Joseph jnr. had the mail run from Hermidale to Nyngan up into the 1950's. He also had his rabbit paddocks and spent years poisoning rabbits for farmers. Joseph, Herbert and Dad had their different mines, one being the Wolfram one at Girilambone.

Joseph jnr. lived in Coffs Harbour and died about 1984. Herbert died 1997.

Dad and the boys knew the Rooneys, Bridles, Brennans, Hardwicks, Gudgeons and Marriots.



The Wright and Pusell Family - by Colleen Dillon

Thomas Wright came from Carcoar to Nymagee in 1911. He married Sara Ware (who came from Adaminaby) in Nymagee. They had three children, Pauline, Dudley and Leila. The Wright family had a general store. The Dillons now live where the store was. Thomas Wright carted goods and petrol from Canbelego, he had a long rubber tyre trailer pulled by horses.

His first night he would camp at Jack Jacob's, 12 miles from Nymagee, it is now known as Currajong. His second night he camped at Restdown, the final part of the trip was to Bobby Mount, a siding between Hermidale and Cobar. When there was wool to cart he would take it over and bring back the supplies for the shop.

Mrs Wright was Albey Ware's sister. Albey and his wife Biddy also lived in Nymagee. Albey Ware was also a carrier. The Wright's first child, Pauline, was born on the 16th October, 1914, in a house opposite the CWA Rooms. She married George Pusell - the wedding was in Nyngan.

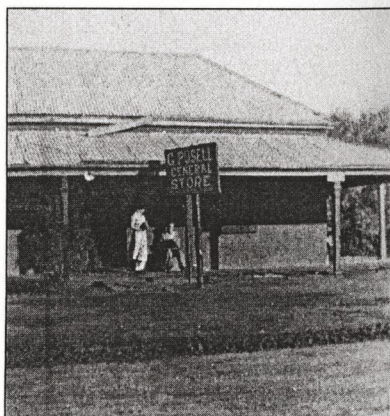
Dudley, the second child married Dulcie Walsh, and the youngest girl, Leila, married Allan McKennon.

Dudley had a bakehouse in Nymagee for many years, he first started at Norton's Bakehouse where Frank Mahy now lives. He then built his own bakehouse, this still stands, it is at the back of what is known as the Malley Hen House.

Dudley was a good cricketer, he also played tennis. He played the saxophone in the band Pauline and George Pusell had known as the Merry Makers. Dudley and Dulcie had three children, Kelvin, Raymond and Gay.

Leila and Allen McKennon have one daughter, Donna. The McKennon family now live at Dubbo. Allen was a stock and station agent in Nymagee for many years, he sold the first Ferguson tractor in Nymagee. Allen was also a butcher in Nymagee for several years.

Pauline and George had one child, Colleen, she was born in Nyngan in 1939. Pauline and George lived with the Wright family until Colleen was 5 years old, they then moved into the bank building. This building became known as Pusell's shop. Pauline and George started the general store in the early 1940's. George was a mail contractor around Nymagee for 25 years, he also carted petrol around the properties. Pauline ran the general store until she was 80. Due to ill health they closed the shop in about 1994.



Front of Pusell's Shop



George Pusell playing his drum

They also had a band which was known as the 'Merry Makers'. The band members were Dudley Wright, who played the saxophone, Pauline the piano, George the drums. Over the years they had different people playing with them to make up the band, some of these were: Bill Hodge on the accordion, Reg Harland on the banjo and Peter Sloane on the saxophone. The band would play for dances at Canbelego, Bobadah, Mt Hope, Kilparney, Nymagee and Cobar. They also played for parties in woolsheds around the district. Their wage was 10 pounds each and they played from 8.00 pm until daylight most times.

Nymagee had a Youth Club, Pauline was always there to play for the club dances, which they had every Saturday night, if there was nothing else on in the district.

George was a good cricket player, he played for Nymagee. Nymagee would travel to Bobadah, Canbelego, Hermidale, Mt Hope, Balowra, Cobar, Tilpa and Kerrigundi to play cricket. Pauline and George also played tennis for Nymagee. They both enjoyed sport. George was always great fun on the tennis court. It was a great talking point, about George having a cold meat pie and a bottle of beer for breakfast, then travel to wherever the tennis was, then play six sets of hard tennis. At the end of the day George would not be knocked up, he would still be ready to party on. George would come home late from the Nymagee Hotel to get ready for a dance that they were to play at. Pauline would be going crook that they would be late, George would powder himself, put the suit on then say, "I am ready Chidd", this was his nickname for Pauline. To this day it is still called a 'George Pusell' when you have not got time for a shower, just use the powder.

In those days cars had no heaters or air conditioning. George would wind the windows down, even in winter. He would do this when driving home from playing at the dances, this was to keep him awake as Pauline could not drive and Colleen was too young.

Pauline played hockey for Nymagee, she was known to fight a lot on the field, hitting her opponents with the hockey stick. George played football for the 'Nymagee Magpies', he was also a Rugby League Referee.

Colleen went to school at Nymagee, she first went to school when the school was held in the court room of the Police Station, while the new school was being built. Colleen left school at 6th class, she was made to go to school for an extra

three weeks because she was not the school leaving age at the time.

While Pauline and George played in the band, Colleen would be put in a bed made up under a stool in the hall.

She married Bill Dillon in Cobar on the 25th February, 1961. They have three children, Linda, Suzanne and Craig. Colleen and Bill both love sport. They both play tennis, Bill also played football for Nymagee and cricket. Colleen played tennis as the top lady player for Nymagee and The Peak tennis clubs. Colleen has been driving a school bus for 31 years, she first drove a station wagon (as the school bus) for Frank Mahy.

They then got the bus run to Cobar which they still run. Colleen is a good dancer, she started to dance at a very young age. She still enjoys dancing and music.

Over the years the Pusell family had many happy Christmas' at The Peak (Betts home). They were mostly late getting out to The Peak as Pauline would open the shop so Nymagee people could pick their ice cream up on Christmas morning.

We all have great memories and stories about Pauline and George. On one particular occasion, George took Linda, his granddaughter, and Rhonda Betts (both very young) to the Condobolin Show. They were travelling in George's white panel van. After a big day at the Show they were ready for home. Linda and Rhonda got in the back of the van and went to sleep. After quite a long time George woke Linda up to get out to open the gate, because they were home. Linda got out, only to discover that they had been driving around Condobolin all the time, and were in someone's driveway!!

This is a true story ... Author Unknown

In about the year of 1930, at The Priory Station, shearing was in full swing.

A new Chinese cook had arrived. So the shearers, being 'boys', decided to play some tricks on the new arrival. Every night they played tricks on poor old 'Charlie', tied his pyjamas in knots, short-sheeted his bed, nailed his shoes to the floor, still 'Charlie' said nothing. His cooking got better, with soup every night.

After about a week the boys said 'we should apologise to Charlie, we've been playing tricks on him every night and still his cooking gets better with a different soup every night'. So into the kitchen they went. 'Charlie', they said, 'we've come to apologise, you are a good cook, so no more tricks.'

Charlie replied, 'Okay, okay, you play no more twicks on Charlie, Charlie no more piddle in de soup.'

Mrs A C Mulcair

Hello there, my name is Annie Catherine Mulcair, nee Mackey. I was born at Nymagee on 6th July, to William and Catherine Jane, nee Grenfell. We lived on a farm. We lived for six months in the old bank.

We had a small shop, McLachlans, next to Finn's Hotel. That shop, along with others, plus the Catholic Church, were blown down by a cyclone.

My brothers, Ernie and Jack, were wood carters for the mine. Tommy, Dave and my father worked in the jackets (ore crushers). Brother Jack was away overseas for four years in the First World War. Ernie stayed in Nymagee, on the government tank (water supply) for about three years. He then worked the land, still in Nymagee. Jim went to Cobar working in the Cobar mine and stayed in Cobar till his death. Tommy worked at Shuttleton mines, about 18 miles out of Nymagee. Dave joined the police force, and served 20 years. Vin was a shearer, travelling around then joined the railways, where he was killed in 1928. Walter worked on a sheep station named 'Killens'. I worked at several jobs, one being at Gundabooka station for people by the name of Simmons.



Anie Mackey married Tom Mulcair
4/9/29 Bourke NSW

My only sister, Mary, passed away at Lithgow in 2000.

I am 96 years old and still enjoying life, having just returned from seven weeks visiting close family members in southern NSW. My only health problem is my lack of eyesight. If I had that there'd be no holding me back.

I dearly remember the 'Back to Nymagee' nights at Leichhardt Town Hall, and various other locations.

Alan and Elaine Rogers

My Mum is in the hostel section of the Condobolin Retirement Village. Charlie Read was Mum's cousin. My sister, Betty Keen, lives in Condo. Mum's sister was Ida Olive Clarice and her brother was John English Read. Their father was John Henry Read, who was born on Coan Downs, Gilgunnia. His father was Charles Henry Read (my Great Grandfather). He married Isabella Roxborough and worked on Coan Downs.

Mum often talks about her going to school at the convent in Nymagee.

Her Grandmother was Lucy Caroline Annie Graham. Mum remembers the night Grannie Graham died - her brother John had to run and get a Mrs Marsh,

who it seems may have been the local nurse. Mum's brother, John, had a mail run in Nymagee around about the 1940's.

Grandfather Read (John Henry) was a labourer and shearer. Mum's sister Ida Harley died in Condobolin several years ago, Johnny died at Tullamore in 1993.

Mum has come across an old school friend, Ivy Lark. She was a Bell before marriage. Mrs Lark boarded at the convent in Nymagee when Mum went there. Mrs Lark will be 86 this year.

I have also found some 'rellies' on my Dad's side that lived at Nymagee. Their name was Sutton. James Samuel Sutton was the caretaker of the government tank at Priory.

James Samuel and wife, Anne Jane, had fourteen children, although four children died at birth. I believe James Samuel is buried in the Nymagee Cemetery. Of the fourteen children, my Grandmother was Mary Ann, who married Alex Parker.

Mary Ann went to work as a domestic on the old Overflow Station. Alexander was a shearer who travelled on his old bicycle to work. He also worked on the Overflow, where he met Mary Ann. He 'acquired' 40 acres of land (not sure how), and started a bee farm, known as (I think) Overflow Apiaries.

Grandfather was a well known Union Delegate for the AWU right throughout the western district, including around Nymagee.

The Read Family - Charles and Noel (nee Lane)

Life was very different for 'bush' people before the sixties. There was always something happening. Every weekend there was sports, tennis and cricket. All the neighbours met up to join in or just have a chat. Dances were held at Nymagee and Collierreina halls and as teenagers we attended both. We drove into the sunset to go to Nymagee and into the sunrise to come home.

In 1950 as a young married couple with four small children, we moved close to Nymagee when we purchased 'The Pines' from Mr and Mrs E Bock. We drove about 400 sheep, along with the necessary dogs, from Miandetta to 'The Pines'. These sheep were primarily for wool and some for our own meals. Sheep were soon followed by cattle and pigs and of course fowls, geese and ducks. Our income came from trapping rabbits by using the steel traps and netting the tanks.

The first few years brought much hard work getting things the way we wanted them. We planted many peppercorn, cedar and kurrajong trees around the outer perimeter of the house yard. An orchard, vegetable and flower gardens were established round the house. Many a day was spent preserving or making jam and pickles from the excess from both the vegetables and fruit so it was not wasted when they were plentiful.

We milked cows, separated the cream and made our own butter. Our bread came with the mail from Hermidale. We have always had a good mail service.

The telephone service was 'party line', with several people on each line. We were on line 20 with K being our signal. The Morse Code system was used giving our telephone as a long, short, long ring, so we had to listen carefully to make sure it was us they were after. This system worked well and if a neighbour on your line was away you could take a message for them. The downside to our telephone service was that we could only be contacted, or make calls, during limited set hours.

Electricity was by way of a generator and in 1966 Mains Power was installed. This meant we had to change all our appliances from 32 to 240 volts so a dual system was used for some time.

The children had to be schooled so I taught them myself for fifteen years. As they grew older each in turn went to boarding school in Dubbo.

The seasons from 1950 to 1964 were kind to the land and everything flourished. 1964 to 1967 brought widespread drought. Most people had fodder stored to last two years but we were all cutting scrub before the rain came. Stock prices were very low during this time and many people had no option but to sell their properties.

During 1962 we were able to help with building the C of E Church and the CWA Rooms. Previous to this we helped raise money to build the Nymagee Hall and we had many parties and tennis days.

My daughters, Evelyn and Dianne, and I were involved with the then 'Girl Guides'. I went on to be the Commissioner for the Tottenham region. In 1963, on their way to a Guide enrolment day our daughters had a car accident. Our eldest daughter, Evelyn, was killed, and Dianne was badly hurt and spent a long time in hospital. This was a very difficult time for the family.

Our sons, Robert and Arthur, both lived in their own small cottages on 'The Pines' after they were married. Eventually they moved on - Robert and Judy to Nyngan while Arthur and Wilma made their home in Tottenham. Dianne, after marrying Geoff Martin, made their home in Nyngan.

My husband, Charles, known to most people as Charlie, passed away in 1997 and since then I have lived on 'The Pines' with the help of the family, mainly my Grandson David.

I have been a member of CWA since I was six years old and am still an active member. In 1997 I was delighted to receive a Group Lifetime Membership Badge at the Bourke CWA Conference and consider this a great privilege.

E N Read

Trogenza Family by Raymond Russell Trogenza

The spelling of the name 'Trogenza' has varied but the pronunciation is always similar to the Cornish dialect, eg Treganza, Trogenso, Trogensoe. Trogenza is a family name from a place name, as TRE means farmstead. The family came to Australia from the western end of Cornwall which was the centre of the Cornish tin mining industry. Tom's father, Thomas, travelled on the 'Florida' which left Plymouth on 15th October, 1885, and arrived in Sydney on 6th December, 1885. He joined other Cornish immigrants mining at Nymagee near Cobar. It was here that he married Annie Marie Grenfell in 1887. They later moved to Lucknow, near Orange, where Tom was born on 18th November, 1901.



Thomas Trogenza
Aged 100
18 November, 2001

The Nymagee Story - my part by Faye Dobson, Woy Woy, NSW

My association with Nymagee commences with my two great-great grandmothers:

1. Alice Anne Hudson, nee Keyte; and,
2. Sarah Owen, formerly Smith, nee Buckley.

Alice Anne had four boys and one girl. Alice was still living in Currawang on 2nd July, 1884, as I have a copy of a will dated that day, hence she had not travelled as yet to Nymagee. Shortly after she and her daughter, Catherine, must have travelled to Nymagee/Cobar to visit her family of boys and grandchildren. Catherine obtained a teaching position in Cobar. Catherine was born on 16th December, 1873, Goulburn.

William Thomas Hudson was born 23rd November, 1856, at Mittagong Range. He married Alice Mary Elizabeth Dow (born Sofala 27th March 1862). They married at St John's Church, Gundagai, on the 14th April, 1879. They produced a large family of four boys and four girls. Alice died giving birth to a still-born child on 2nd August 1906, at Nymagee. It is said William died of a broken heart, dying also in Nymagee on 3rd April, 1907 - only months after his wife's death.

Henry James Hudson, born Mount Broughton on 11th January, 1860. He married Elizabeth Ann Morris in Cobar. She was born in Fulham, Victoria. They

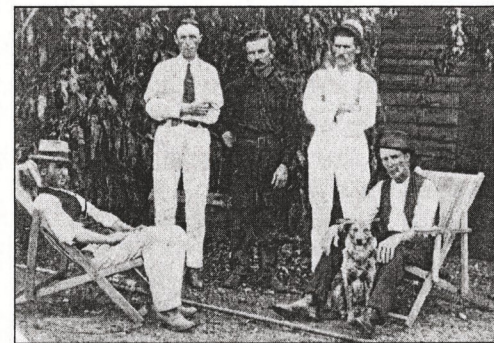
had a family of four boys and four girls, also one male and one female child deceased. Henry died prior to Elizabeth, who died in Canterbury, Sydney, on 26th July, 1955, at the age of 91 years.

John Edward Hudson, born Collector on the 25th November, 1861. He never married and lived most of his life with Alice Anne Hudson. He died on 29th October, 1928.

Francis Hudson, born Currawang on the 19th September, 1863, married Mary Smith (born on 2nd September, 1869, Wallace Town in the district of Wagga Wagga).

They married on the 29th June, 1889, Congregational Church, Cleveland Street, Sydney. Francis and Mary went to live in Nymagee in 1889. Nine of their children were born in Nymagee - five boys and five girls in all. Their first born, Ruby Catherine, was born on the 16th October, 1888, Goulburn. Ruby was my beloved Nana and my best friend until her death in 1970.

Francis mined to support their growing family and both Francis and Mary were devout Christians. Their first son, Francis Thomas (Tom) born in 1895, was killed on the 30th September, 1917, at Flanders. His name is on the Menine Gate, Belgium, as he is the 'unknown soldier' having no known grave. The people of Shuttleton had a medal engraved in his honour and his death was a dreadful blow to the family as Mary had already lost a brother in WW1 in 1915. To this day I possess letters written by Tom to 'Grannie Alice Anne', his mother Mary and to my Nana, Ruby. These letters nearly 'went to the tip' until handed to me.



The photograph of five men shows Francis Hudson on the right hand side with the dog in front of him.

Francis and Mary later moved to Tempe, Sydney and finally Canterbury. Francis died on the 4th March 1937, at the Sacred Heart Hospice, Darlinghurst, aged 73 years and buried in the Rookwood Cemetery.

When Francis and Mary married, the Hudson and Smith families were linked. Mary had met Francis (as a young girl) whilst he and his brothers were working in the Copper Mine. They continued to work there until the closure of the mine, due to the fall in copper prices, 1893. It re-opened 1906.

Mary's sister, Rose Anne, born 16th March 1868, Yass, met George Denniss (born 13th November, 1853, Yallah) whilst he and she lived in Nymagee. They married in Cobar on 4th June 1884, and remained in Nymagee until the mine's closure. They then opened a bootmakers business in Byrock. They produced

three boys and one girl - George died in Dulwich Hill in July, 1935, and Rose Anne died on 2nd November, 1951, Croydon Park.

Alice Anne Hudson was born on 10th May, 1838, Montreal, Canada, whilst his father William Keyte served in the 'Private Royals', Her Majesty's Troop. She arrived in Australia a free settler on the ship 'Kate' on 18th November, 1854, with her family. John Thomas born Surrey, UK, arrived via the 'Minstrel II' on the 22nd August, 1825.

Alice Anne died on the 29th November, 1922, Waverly. John Thomas Hudson died on the 9th August, 1875, Liverpool, Sydney. They were married at the Trinity Church, Berrima, on the 4th February, 1856.

Sarah Owen, formerly Smith, nee Buckley.

Sarah's life was a very short and sad one. She was born c1840, Sydney, daughter of John Buckley and Mary Gillies. Very little is known of her young life, apart from the fact she lived with her mother, step father John Packham and her many siblings, Collector and Lake George.

Whilst working in Gunning, she met and married James Smith (Smyth), a free settler who arrived c1853 from Ireland. They married St Augustine's Catholic Church, Yass, on the 28th November, 1859. They had three boys and one girl, Rosanna, who lived barely two months, followed by Rose Anne (later to become Rose Denniss) then Mary who was to marry Francis Hudson.

James died on the 9th December, 1869, at Young, when Mary was three months old. Sarah had living three boys and two girls at the time of his death.

She later married Thomas Owen (8th July, 1871) at Goulburn Manse Presbyterian Church. He was a widower and a 'smelter'. They produced four boys, born at Goulburn, Orange and two at Cowra. Seeing that he had worked at 'Phoenix Mine', Currawang, work was obtained in Nymagee where their last boy, Edward, was born on the 21st November, 1884.

Sarah died on the 2nd October, 1885, at Nymagee of strychnine poisoning. She was buried on 4th October, 1885, with no Minister of Religion present. However, William Hudson (who later became her daughter Mary's brother-in-law) was present at the burial. When she died she had eleven children living.

Thomas Owen died in September 1914, Illawong, and was buried there. He had worked as a smelter at Mount Hope.

My maternal grandparents married on the 2nd January, 1908, St Paul's Church, Cobar. Frederick Henry Hall, born 16th August, 1885, Benevolent Asylum, Central Square, Sydney. Ruby Catherine Hudson, born Goulburn 16th October, 1888. At the time of their marriage he was an engine driver at Cobar and she: private life, Nymagee.

Their first born, Henry Joseph Leopold, born 20th June, 1908, Nymagee, died

3rd November, 1908 and buried at Cobar. Rosina Mary was born 26th March, 1910, she died Strathfield April 1999, buried Rookwood.

Francis William Claude, born 20th May, 1912, Tottenham, died 3rd January 1913, Lidcombe, Sydney and buried Rookwood.

Edna Violet (Vi) was their fourth child, born Nymagee on 7th June, 1914, she was my beloved mother. She 'went to God' 21st July, 1975, Haberfield, aged 61 years.

Frederick and Ruby produced Nola Pansy on the 25th December, 1916, Nymagee, Gladys Lorna, born Tottenham 1919. The three remaining children were born in the western suburbs of Sydney, Dennis Clive (Kevin) 26th June, 1922, Canterbury, Beryl, 1924, and Thora 17th September, 1926.

Ruby Catherine died at Five Dock, Sydney, on 22nd February 1970, buried at Rookwood, and Frederick Henry died on the 3rd April, 1971, buried Rookwood.

Quite apart from the 'Nymagee Story' two people who lived there played a part in WWI and WWII - George Owen (born 1877, son of Sarah and Thomas Owen) was an ANZAC, his Army No being 1111. He was in the actual landing 25th April, 1915, severely wounded in the chest, sent back home and died on 6th November, 1915.

Also, Frederick Henry Hall was imprisoned in 'Changi' and spent three and a half years as a prisoner. He was working in a tin mine, Penang, when Singapore fell, and taken prisoner. He worked at Captain's Flat, mining, after the war.

The Bramston Family As told by June Davis (nee Innes)

My Grandparents were Annie Thompson (born in 1859 in Eaglehawk, Victoria) and James Henry Bramston (born in 1858 in Dunolly, Victoria).

They met in Victoria but were married in Mount Hope in NSW on 25th October, 1884. She was noted as being a household servant and he a miner.

James was an animal lover and that was how she was attracted to him. The first time she saw him he got down from his horse drawn cart, filled his hat with water and gave his horse and dog a drink.

Soon after the marriage they moved to Nymagee, NSW (Aboriginal name describing a plain surrounded by hills. The soil is red and the wattle is plentiful). James was then 26 years old and his wife one year younger. Their first child



James & Annie Bramston

(a son) was burned to death in a house fire.

They went on to have six more children:

James	b 1887
Fredrick	b 1889
Elsie	b 1891 (on her parent's 7th Wedding Anniversary)
Ernest (Toddler)	b 1894
William (Dick or Unc)	b 1898
Annie	b 1902 (my mother)

The Bramston family (I believe) lived on the right hand side of the Mine Manager's house on the hill.

Knowing Grandfather loved animals, someone in the middle of the night rode on a horse up to the house, and dropped a box of young kittens and rode away again.

Grandmother died in 1927 and Grandfather, Christmas Day, 1938.

My mother and her sister Elsie married brothers. Mum married Albert Braidwood Innes (Bert) from Braidwood, NSW, Elsie married James Innes many years before and had three sons James (Jim), Allan (Jack), Raymond (Bob).

Mum and Dad had eight children:

Ronald Ernest	b 31st July 1925
Keith James	b 28th January 1928
Ula Catherine	b 29th April 1930
June Aileen	b 25th June 1933
Valerie Margaret	b 7th April 1935
Raymond Albert	b 10th March 1937
Patricia Anne	b 31st March 1940
Robyn Joy	b 27th January 1944

While we lived in Nymagee, Mum used to ride her bike to see her friend Mrs Kershaw who lived out of town. She would 'dink' her youngest three children. Ray would sit on a small pillow in a basket in front, I sat on the bar, and Valerie on the rack at the back.

We sometimes went for a 'buster' as Mum tried to ride in the sand on the track. Mum would soon get her confidence back and then we would be on our way again (always very pleased to arrive!).

When my eldest brother was very young he was sent to the shop to get a paper. He couldn't talk very well and the shopkeeper Dick McLean could not understand what he wanted until he asked, 'What do you want to do with it?' The answer he got was 'Read!'

Mum loved to play cards. She would take the baby with her and leave the rest

of the children with Dad. One night Mum came home from cards and went to bed. It wasn't till the morning she realised that she had left the baby behind.

There was a special function at the hall one night. All the children would get up early next morning and go to the hall to see what they could find (usually money). I found a gold filigree butterfly brooch and was rewarded for its return.

We left Nymagee in 1938 just before the Second World War began. Our new home was in Paddington, Sydney.

In 1942, three Japanese submarines were found in Sydney Harbour. Mum and most of my brothers and sisters were evacuated back to Nymagee. That left only Dad and Ron living in Sydney. Soon after, Ron joined the army and went to the South Pacific.

The night we arrived in Nymagee, we all slept at my Uncle and Aunt's place - Toddler and Iris. They were then living in the Mine Manager's house on the hill. We all slept on mattresses along the verandah.

We were all at school except the youngest two, Ray and Patricia. Mr and Mrs Smith (the school teachers) were there to greet us. At that time 28 pupils were attending school, more than ever before, as there were three other evacuated families in Nymagee too.

Mr Smith taught all the lessons to the 28 children. No one liked the one afternoon a week that he made everyone sing a song by themselves in front of the class. At that time it was the most embarrassing thing I ever had to do. Songs like 'It's a long way to Tipperary', 'Home to dinner', 'Rocking alone in an old rocking chair', and 'Keep the home fires burning' were heard. Mrs Smith taught sewing one afternoon each week while Mr Smith had the boys for sport.

One day in class, we looked out the open door to see my young brother running across the paddock with a small white bull chasing him. He was bringing our lunches to school and just made it to the wire fence in time.

My cousin Velma wore glasses and had just lost them down the well beside the verandah. Cousin Elsie had a big competition to guess what she had in her pocket. After what seemed like a million guesses she told us it was 'a hole'.

We used to be friends with an old man that lived near a tank and his name was Jack Cavanagh. He grew a lot of vegetables and always gave some to the family. Another very old man lived not far from us called Mr Buchanan. He would sit out the front of his place and have a white horse's tail to flick the flies away. He saved all the lead soldiers and things out of the porridge packets for us.

My Uncle Dick came to see us at home one day. He must have been tired as he laid on the bed on the front verandah and went to sleep. He was snoring loudly as we tied his shoes by the laces up on top of a cedar tree in the front yard. We were in lots of trouble as he tried to catch us but the stones were hurting his feet as he

ran to chase us. Mum came out to see what all the noise was about. She then made us go up the tree to get the shoes. We didn't come down till Unc had left. He loved us and used to pinch us on the cheek and say 'You lovely little peach!'

A few nights after that we had a wild pig on our front verandah. Mum was too scared to go out and send it on its way. After keeping us awake for some time it left. We made sure that the gate was kept closed after that.

My brother Keith and cousin Bob Bramston used to round the goats up from the mine hill. Bob used to ride 'Bluey' and Keith rode 'Taffy'. The little baby goats were lovely. Many times we had goats milk to drink.

The Post Office built in the early days was destined for Wellington, NSW. Due to a mix up, Wellington received Nymagee's Post Office and Nymagee received the better one that is now standing today.

We left Nymagee sometime late in 1942, home to Sydney and very happy to see our Dad again!

Prisk Family - by Joy Prisk

Thomas Prisk and Mary Ann Moyle lived in Cornwall, they were married on 20th January 1877 at the Holy Trinity Church, Parish of Carmenellis, County Cornwall. Thomas worked as a shop assistant. We believe that some of Thomas' older brothers had already settled in Victoria and it was his wish to join them. They arrived in Sydney on 18th September, 1878. We know that the family went to Victoria and lived at Stawell for a time as their first born child died there. They remained there from 1879 to 1885. Maybe it was the death of their daughter Adelaide who was born in 1884 and died the next year that had the family move to Nymagee where Thomas' brother was working in the copper mines at Nymagee.

While living in Nymagee William Edward was born on 21st January 1889, he became known as young 'Willie'. Thomas and Mary decided to make their home in Cobar where he spent most of his working life. Firstly, I believe, on the Great Cobar Copper Mine. It was in Cobar that Willie completed his schooling and obtained his working life. He met and married Beatrice Mary May, daughter of George May. Both Willie and Beatrice attended Cobar Public School for a time.

Both families were Wesleyan/Methodist and George May played a very important role in the Cobar Church. Beatrice played the organ in the Church before she married and all the days of her life. Bill, or Willie as he was known, worked on many different trades on the mine. The birth certificates of his children gives a list of many and varied occupations. Beatrice and Willie had a large family of Doris, William (young Bill), Fred, Colin (who died when he was seven months), Stella, Jean, Max, Len, John and Allen (Sid). Now there is only one member of his children living, daughter Jean (Mrs Jean Ward, her husband was Mayor of Cobar for many years and was responsible for the commencement of the planting of the green belt around the town). Ward Oval is named after Jim Ward who worked as Assistant

Postmaster while stationed here. Willie and Beatrice had 24 grandchildren, ten boys and fourteen girls. Beatrice only had the pleasure of having seen the oldest members of her grandchildren before she died at an early age at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney.

Willie and Beatrice bought the small farm on Old Lerida Road. It was here that they had the security of owning their own home at long last having lived in rented houses. They had a cow for milk for the children and were able to grow fruit and vegetables for their own use. Even though money was short the family never starved, as they were able to have fowls for eggs and young roosters to eat along with the boys catching rabbits for meat. Sid and John would take their billy wagon to the hospital to collect the scraps for their fowls, ducks, and turkeys to eat keeping the feed costs very low. When there were eggs to spare these were sold to customers who always wanted fresh eggs.

After the closure of the Great Mine, Willie worked on the Occidental Mine for a number of years and when it closed down Willie and his second wife moved to Sydney to live. For many years he worked at Bonds Clothing Factory and to obtain work there he put his age back many years making him younger than many of his children. Willie worked in the machinery by operating the steam engine which drove some of the plant.

It was always Willie's wish to receive a telegram from the Queen on his 100th birthday which he never quite made, he became ill and was admitted to hospital where he spent his last days. He was cremated and his ashes are buried in his first wife's grave at Rookwood Methodist Cemetery.

Jones & Thomas Families by Mrs G M Riach

My mother, Gladys M Jones, used to say she was born in Nymagee in 1899. The marriage certificate of her parents, Agnes Thomas and Henry Allen Jones were married in Nyngan on the 21st December, 1892, they returned to live in Nymagee. Six of their children were born in Nymagee, but the last child (number 7) was born in Tottenham in 1911. I think the family left Nymagee for Tottenham 1909-1910. I have been told Agnes was a tailoress/seamstress and midwife. From an old postcard their address was Hospital Road, Nymagee. I don't know much about my great grandparents, David and Sarah Thomas, but have visited their grave in Nymagee cemetery. They were Welsh. Sarah died 19th August, 1892 (55 years) and David died 3rd June, 1890 (69 years). Some relatives say he was a mine manager as he was at Captains Flat (Goulburn), others say he was a smelter. A relative of mine, Myra Miller, Cobar, told me John Jones died 11th October, 1901, and is buried in the Wesley section of Cobar cemetery, but the grave has no headstone (his wife died in Broken Hill in 1895). Myra would have more information on her great grandmother, Sarah Ellen Jones, was my grandfather's sister (he was Henry Allen Jones). Sarah born 12th December, 1865, died 28th July, 1890, at Nymagee.

She married Thomas Maidens on the 14th June, 1884, at Nymagee in the Wesleyan Church. Their son Thomas was later a Cobar Mayor. Grandfather Henry Allen Jones, had a horse and drays and carried wood to the mines. He was an expert axeman. Walter John Jones, a brother of Henry's was born Clunes, Victoria, but married Fanny Beecham in 1906 in Nymagee. He is buried in Methodist section of Cobar cemetery (18th June 1951).

JONES FAMILY

Henry Allen Jones married 21st December 1892 Nyngan
Agnes Thomas returned to reside in Nymagee

Children:

Sarah Ellen born 15th June 1893 Nymagee
Henry Allen born 4th February 1897 Nymagee
Gladys May born 5th May 1899 Nymagee
Edith Agnes born 4th May 1901 Nymagee
Thomas Christy born 25th October 1903 Nymagee
Myrtle Alice born 20th February 1907 Nymagee (was 18 months old when left Nymagee)

THOMAS FAMILY

David and Sarah Thomas buried together in Nymagee cemetery, when they arrived is unknown. The list below I do not know who was in Nymagee, but my grandmother Agnes was.

THE FAMILY

David Henry born 1856
Mary born 1857
Sarah Ann born 1859
William Thomas born 1860
Margaret Jane born 1862
George born 1863 (two Georges died childbirth)
Louise born 1867 (did not survive)
Edward born 1869 (died Dubbo)
Fred born 1870
Agnes born 1872 (my grandmother)
Elizabeth born 1873
Louise born 1875
Emily born 1876
Florence Diana May born 1878 died 8th April 1935 at Parkes (57 years)
Allurt Victor born 1882 died 58 years at Orange

Little Boy Lost - Glen Dunne

The greatest gift of all is the gift of life and surely one of the cruellest blows that fate can hand out to any mother would have to be a lost child in the wilderness.

Such an incident happened in the early spring of 1931, on a property situated 100 miles from Cobar and Ivanhoe and 60 miles from Roto and Mount hope.

The morning dawned to a cover of heavy white frost, cold, crisp and fine over "Karwarn Station". Members of the household were hurrying about preparing for the menfolk to go into the paddocks to work. Following their departure, all settled down to the more routine chores of the homestead. Girls made beds and tidied the house, preparation of bread dough for baking etc. and a toddler also needing attention.

The younger children spotted some wild Emus and they all gave chase with the dogs, as this was a means of food for them all. The older children told young Tom to return home because he could not go with them. The older children and dogs went on with the chase and Tom was to return home.

After the excitement of the chase, time passed before it was noticed that their little three-year-old brother was nowhere to be found.

Despite the distance, word of the missing child spread quickly. Even though there was a Chevy Capital and a sx car on the property. A fresh horse was always kept for emergencies and 11 year old Clive rode to "Ashley Downs". One of the Ashcroft boys then rode to "Red Tank" where the message was passed by telephone that little Tom Shields, a three year old was lost in the bush.

Men arrived by horseback, wagon and a truckload. It was fortunate that at that time two big properties were shearing. The men came from both sheds as well as far away properties. The Aborigines from a Mission close by also arrived to help. One, two, three days passed, each night was bitterly cold and heavy frosts continued to cover the countryside. Men camped where they finished searching that day, cold and weary but determined to continue the search. There were reports of no less than eighty men camped overnight in and around the old "Warbreccan" hut. They kept walking around to try and keep warm then camp down for a while as it was so cold during the night.

Through the following days mountains of food was prepared and consumed by the searchers and helpers. In those times there was only plain flour and baking powder was added. Towards the sixth day baking powder ran out so the women made mounds of scones instead of bread.

Stern faced men watched on as the saddened family searched each newcomer's face hopefully, only to have their hopes shattered.

The search continued through the fourth and fifth days with still no word. The mallee country is very thick and dense. Little hope was now held for the missing

child. No three-year old could survive the freezing cold nights for so long.

Further to the north on "Coan Downs" station, a young drover's boy returned to camp relating how he had seen a small boy who "was going to his mother". The old drover, cursing the lad for the fool that he was, hurried to the spot where the child had been seen. No child was to be found.

The bookkeeper from "Yathong" who arrived by car joined in the search and this time with success. Imagine the joy the family and searches felt as the word quickly spread that young Tom had been found and was alive.

Young Tom was taken to "Allawah" station, now known as "Irymple". Mrs. Sheridan, wife of the owner, had by chance her sister who was a trained nurse, visiting. Young Tom was in good hands. His only complaint was that "the nasty old thing took my soup from me". This was done to ensure that nourishment was not taken too quickly. Preventing making the child ill.

Six days and five nights had passed without a proper meal and in freezing overnight temperatures. He travelled no less than forty miles from his home following the wire netting fence. From what he was able to tell his parents, he lived on the sweet stalks of the Crowfoot, which was thankfully in abundance that year. Dressed in a flannel and a little short coat and no shoes, this remarkable child survived the ordeal. He turned four the week after he was found.

What made this so much more remarkable was that the family only moved from Mildura in 1929 because the climate was no good for this poor sick little boy.

Written by his sister Glen Dunne nee Shields.

Pat Rieksen Story

My paternal grandmother, Kathleen Bridget Blanche Carroll, was born in Nymagee to Michael Carroll and Catherine Mary Connolly on 30th January, 1888. She was their fifth child born in Nymagee. The others were Grace 1882, Herbert 1884, Mary 1886 and Patrick 1887. Michael, the child after my grandmother, was born in Narromine and the last child, Marjorie, was born in Narrabri. Catherine Connolly was born Catherine Mary O'Brien in Collector and had three children to her first husband, Matthew Bernard Connolly. They were Julia Rose, Gregory Bernard and Lillian May. Michael Carroll, a labourer, and Catherine Connolly married in the residence of the District Registrar in Nymagee on 2nd November, 1889. She was a widow. I know nothing of their life in Nymagee. My grandmother was ill before she died in 1961. In one of her episodes back into the past she was terrified and wanted everyone to hide the children from the Aborigines who were attacking the house while the men were at work. Whether this had really happened or happened in Nymagee I don't know.

Daughter Grace Carroll married James Clarke in 1900 in Bingarra. Charles (known as Chick or Chikka) Clarke, one of their sons, was a talented artist who drew for the Smith's Weekly.

Herbert Carroll married Mary Johnstone in Sydney. Mary Carroll married George Elliott in 1907 in Kurri Kurri, Kathleen Carroll (my grandmother) married Robert Baker in Sydney, Michael Carroll was a sergeant in WW1, Michael, Patrick and Marjorie Carroll did not marry. Patrick may have died when a child. Perhaps there are some of my relatives still living in the Nymagee area. If so, I would like to make contact with them. When I first started my family research, I wrote to the then school teacher at Nymagee to try and find about the history of the town but had no reply.

My father's sister, Catherine, was born at Iron Bark Station, Barraba, on 14th December, 1907. She died on 18th November, 1927, in Sydney, when Marjorie, her youngest daughter, was four months old. Kathleen reared Marj and her older sister, Kathleen, as her own daughters as their father, William Baker, couldn't manage two babies under 18 months of age. He later remarried. The girls were adults before they knew my father, George Malcolm, and his younger brother, Ernest Percival, were their uncles, not their brothers and my grandmother was their grandmother, not their mother. Dad and his brother were born in Sydney. Uncle Ern died at Manildra.

My father died on 11th February 1989, eight days after his 77th birthday. During the Depression he, my Uncle Ern and Chick Elliott worked on the country properties of their families. Who owned them or where the properties were, I have no idea. The O'Briens had property in Collector near Goulburn. Dad used to tell of a family who had a blind daughter named Kate. Dad said she could ride a horse and work cattle as well as any sighted person and could also kill any marauding snake in her way. Another family had thirteen girls then one boy whom the parents called Vivien. Mum met them but I have yet to find these families in my research. Unfortunately we didn't keep in contact with Dad's family when my brothers and I were young and the relatives I've met in later life ask me for information as they also have scant knowledge.

I have a story about the name Nymagee that might amuse you. A few years ago when I was working we had a Punter's Club. Each week we all put an amount in. Half the money was banked for our end of year party and the other half was used for punting. It was to be on a roster basis but the only one betting was the boss, on 'sure things' that lost. When I reminded Dave, the organiser, it was again my turn to bet he said 'Sorry Pat. I've given the money to John. He has a sure thing for tonight's dogs'. Feeling miffed I decided to look in the racing section of the paper and have a bet for myself to spite them. In Race 7 there was a horse named 'Nymagee'. That was good, after all Nymagee was where my grandmother was born, but at the top of the column it read Daily Double on Race 7. Thinking it meant you had to back two horses in Race 7, I looked and there was a horse called

'Irish Clipper'. Fine. After all the family was Irish and they came out on ships. Then my husband, who has supported the TAB for so many years it isn't funny, said I had to have three horses. His idea of a joke seeing I had no idea of what to do. So back to Race 7 and there was a horse 'Be Able' and with scientific knowledge of racing form I thought 'well they had to be good to Be Able to survive in places like Nymagee in the 1880's'. Husband yelled, 'why did you pick that horse for? It's just come back from a rest and has never run that distance'. Still, I gave the three names and money to my daughters to put a 1 unit Boxed Trifecta on for me at the TAB. The phone rang on Saturday afternoon and shrieks of 'you've won, you've won' from the other end. \$156. I had great pleasure gloating at work in front of John and Dave. When Dave asked if I'd put money on for the Punter's Club I reminded him my turn had been given to the boss to lose our money. Next time around I was allowed to bet and won another Trifecta for \$132. I lost the next and last Trifecta I bet, but I now know you can bet on only one horse in a race and don't have to take a double, trifecta or whatever.

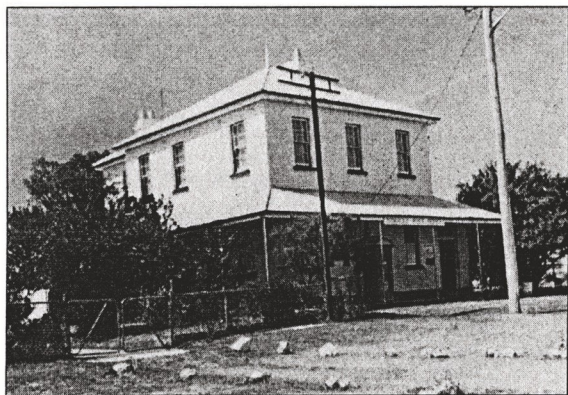
The Post Office - Garry Elder

A friend of mine sent me a copy of an advertisement, from the Cobar Weekly, re Memories of Nymagee.

I am Len and Pat Von Schill's son in law, married to their daughter Anne. Quite some years ago, when Pat came to Wagga and the subsequent sale of the Post office, a period in our lives came to an end. Len and Pat moved up to Nymagee, the year Anne and I were married, 1972. We spent every available holiday from that year, to the time Pat had to come to Wagga, in Nymagee.

Our three children were Christened at the Post Office, along with Anne's sister's son and daughter.

My memories are vast in the times we had at Nymagee and the wonderful people we met and became friends with. The running of the old telephone exchange, mail days, the vege man. All the



characters down at the pub, Friday night dart nights.

Two of our children went to school there for a short period, while Anne and I were overseas. The Christmas the tip caught on fire, I was then in the Royal Australian Navy, that was the Christmas that Tracy hit Darwin. I missed my ship as I burnt my foot fighting the tip fire.

Now that Lou Levy has moved to Cobar the thread is broken.

When the post office sold I wrote a poem that I would like you to read, it is about a place that my family and I will forever hold in our hearts.

The Post Office

The evening breeze moves softly, through the peppercorn boughs
Sun's slanting light, plays havoc with the flowers

Paint is peeling, timbers warped and windows stained with time
Hardly reminiscent, of the dwelling in my mind

Lawns no longer cared for, the gardens now in trouble
This once grand abode, descends slowly into rubble

Memories come flooding back, of days so long in the past
Christenings, birthdays and barbecues, what a pity it couldn't last

Mail days always busy, lots of folk in town
The news for some made them laugh, others had cause to frown

Many friends have moved on, others have passed away
Some names I have forgotten, some I carry to this day

We were not the first ones here, most before our time
Once this lonely little spot, a busy centre, now in decline

One day perhaps, if the roads improve, bringing travellers to this place
They're bound to stop, admire and question? A look of wonder on every face

But behind the cracked and peeling paint, the ghosts they play it seems
Leaving those of us that are left behind, still connected in our dreams

The Turner Family Connection with Nymagee

The Turner family was associated with Nymagee in the early 1900's. At least two sons of Jennett (nee BONE) and Henry Robert TURNER were married there, and another son was buried there.

Jennett and Henry TURNER were married at Lake Cargelligo in 1875 and they had at least 15 children. Their eighth child, Austin George TURNER, who was born at Hillston in 1885, died in Nymagee on 22nd February, 1904, aged 18 years.

In 1905, Austin's brother, Thomas TURNER, aged 24, married Maud E JONES in Nymagee and the following year, 1906, another brother, John William TURNER, aged 29 years, married Maud's sister, Martha JONES, in Nymagee.

As a number of other children of Jennett and Henry were born and died at Hillston from 1883 to 1887 and Mt Hope in 1890, it would appear the family lived in the Nymagee district for some years before moving to Tottenham.

Children of Jennett Theresa (nee BONE) and Henry Robert TURNER:

Janet Theresa DUNNE (nee BONE) b 1873 d 1956 (died Sydney, buried Cobar)

Henry A TURNER b 1875

John William TURNER b 1877

Robert C TURNER b 1879

Gertrude M GRANT (nee TURNER) b 1880

Thomas Bertie TURNER b 1881 d 1965 (buried Tottenham)

Ellen May TURNER b 1883 d 1884 (died Hillston)

Austin George TURNER b 1885 d 1904 (died Nymagee)

Walter Ernest TURNER b 1887 d 1891 (died Mt Hope)

Frederick TURNER b 1889 d 1890

Sophia Ellen WALSH (nee TURNER) b 1890 d 1983 (died and buried Sydney)

Florence Mary HUGGART (nee TURNER) b 1892

Alice M STALLARD (nee TURNER) b 1895

Daniel Alexander TURNER b 1899 d 1968 (died and buried Cobar)

As this family is still being researched, there are a number of gaps in the information available. A later connection with Nymagee for this family occurred when a daughter of Sophia Ellen (nee TURNER) and Charles Luke WALSH, Dulcie WALSH married Dudley WRIGHT and they made their home in Nymagee during the 1940's.

Thomas and Maud (nee JONES) TURNER's Children:

Lola F EVERINGHAM

Gladys M FISHPOOL

Dulcie CRANSTON

Bertie TURNER

Lloyd TURNER

Mavis HOOPER

Darrell TURNER

Alice V CROWLEY

Ilma EVERINGHAM

John William and Martha (nee JONES) TURNER's Children:

Zita

Thelma

Nelly Jean

Trevor

Sophia Ellen (nee TURNER) and Charles Luke WALSH's Children:

Kathleen Florence WALSH b 1916 d 1993 (died and buried Sydney)

Martin Vincent WALSH b 1917 d 1965 (died Gladstone, Qld, buried Sydney)

Dulcie Ilma WRIGHT b 1919 d 1999 (died Gosford, buried Dubbo)

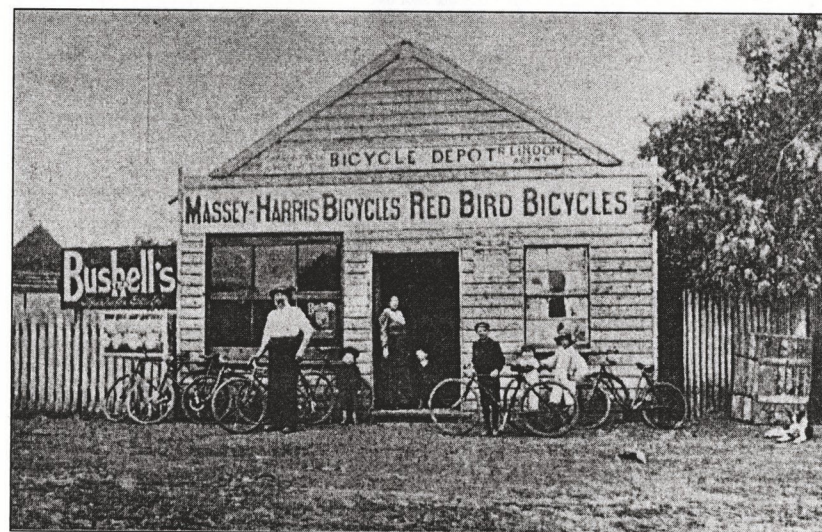
Doreen Alice May MYERS b 1921 d 1991 (died and buried Sydney)

Charles Bertrude WALSH b 1924 d 1995 (died and buried Bathurst)

Patricia Joan MACLEAN b 1928

Robert Maxwell WALSH b 1930

Ronald Alexander WALSH b 1933 d 1937 (died and buried Tottenham)



Linden Bicycle Depot, Nymagee

Les Rostron, Wangaratta, Victoria - Eremeran Station

In the 1930's the manager of Eremeran Station would go to town approximately every three months. The workers would probably go once every 12 months.

I remember the manager, Jock Gayfer, on returning home from town, would drive past the cottage we lived in. He would have a handful of lollies that he would throw over the fence on his way past, us kids would be scrambling like a mob of chickens picking them up

One year, Eric Byrnes came to Eremeran shearing. He came across from 'Kilparney' via Tara. He hadn't been along the road for some time and in the mean time there had been a storm and a creek a couple of miles from the homestead had washed away. The old road where it had washed away, with a fall of about 3 feet, went straight ahead, but the new detour around the wash away took a bend a bit further down. Eric came along about midnight, went straight ahead and his vehicle ended up upside down in the bottom of the creek. He walked approximately 2 miles to our house for help from Dad. I mentioned this to Cliff Byrnes at the Gilgunnia Centenary, he informed me that Eric's car was a Wolsley Sports Roadster - 2 seater.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
TO BE ADDRESSED TO
"THE MANAGER"
TELEPHONE NYMAGEE

EREMERAN STATION

NYMAGEE

N.S.W. 7th. July. 19 37.

The Bearer, Mr. Robert Rostron has been in my employ for over ~~four~~ fourteen years.

Due to his ability amongst stock and the handling of employee I promoted him to second overseer which position he held for eight years, since when he has been head overseer.

I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Rostron, being very competent in his duties and a thorough sheep man and under the circumstances can recommend him to anyone requiring his services.

Until recently the area of this property was 361,000 acres.

W. B. Gayfer
.....

Manager.

Attached is a reference written by Jock Gayfer for my father Mr Robert Rostron.

At the time that Jock Gayfer wrote the reference we lived at Urambie. That's where Dad was second-in-charge overseer. Then we shifted to Eremeran and he became Head Overseer. He replaced Jerry Roberts who was transferred as manager to one of Goldsbrough Mort's stations in the Nyngan area.

When Eremeran was cut up Urambie was Gazetted as Yerambye.

Jock Gayfer came to our house one day to give Mum the news that Henry McLean had died (he was a miner at Nymagee). Mum, Eric, Les, Marion and Mr Gayfer took off for Nymagee. Somewhere along the road we had a puncture. We had no spare. While he took the wheel off and got the tyre off the rim, he had us kids plucking grass to fill the tyre. We limped slowly on grass into Nymagee. (Henry McLean was Dot Rostron's father.)

Initially mail and phone service came via Nymagee. The Post Master was Dick Collins. As many people knew, communication on party phone lines was very ordinary. Dick was very popular with the bush people, the way he put himself out helping relay messages, etc. The above mentioned phone service came via Condobolin.

Head office of Goldsbrough Mort was in Melbourne. Some 'big heads' there reckoned that rabbit trappers bred rabbits. That meant, that for years there was no trapping allowed on Eremeran. The only means for us boys on the station to make a bit of pocket money was to trap rabbits for the skins. The travelling manager from Goldsbrough Mort came twice a year and stayed 7-10 days. During that time we had to stop our trapping.

Rob Rostron worked on Eremeran for 25 years. When he left he got a 25 pound bonus.



Old Butcher Shop

Pat Mackinnon Story

My name is Pat (known as Tisher) Edwards Mackinnon. I was known as Tisher until I was 21 and moved to Condobolin, that gave me an opportunity to disregard my dreadful nickname, given to me as a three week old by my old Aunt (whom I loathed from an early age).

My dear young brother, Arch, then sarcastically began to call me Pat, short for Patricia as christened. Many thanks to Arch! There is probably less than 6 people who have ever called me Tisher since.

I am very proud to be the daughter of my wonderful mother and father - George and Lillian Mackinnon, previously of 'Marigold' Nymagee. They were great parents and did everything possible to fulfil our best upbringing and happiness.

Our property was father's Soldier settlers block after returning from long service in World War 1.

My favourite past time, particularly in summer afternoons or evenings at home, was to ride my swing and sing my heart out, until I was called to get ready for tea or bed. We also played many board games and cards.

We were never allowed to play cards or sew on Sundays, except during WW2 when Mum continually did a lot of sewing for the Red Cross - that was allowed on Sundays. I knitted balaclavas and mittens for the Red Cross.

Whenever there was time on Sunday, we used to go cray fishing in autumn and winter, at one of our particular tanks or the big tank at Old Gilgunnia. If we went to the tank at Old Gilgunnia we would call on an old Chinaman called 'Charlies fruit and vegetable garden' before going home.

Arch was very thin in those days and Charlie used to tell Mum to give him a daily good dose of stout to build up his constitution, but of course that didn't happen. He eventually grew up strong and healthy regardless. He joined the Royal Air force as soon as he was old enough, and served until the end of the war. Thankfully, he didn't get sent overseas. My eldest brother, Allan, also served in the Air Force, and fortunately didn't get sent overseas either.

Allan and I had correspondence school until we could no longer get Governesses (teachers). The last girl we had was only 16 years old, and I turned 12, so she and I were good friends. At the end of that year I went to boarding school. Allan also went to boarding school for the last 3 years of his schooling.

Arch started school at Nymagee and boarded at the Post Office with Mr. & Mrs. Grady, until they got a move. Then he boarded in Cobar, and had many changes of schools due to difficulty in finding suitable people to board with at such a young age. Regardless, he did wonderfully well. Went to Uni. and became a Bachelor of Science. Arch married his Uni. girlfriend in 1955. Then after a few years of teaching, they both moved with their two children to Ballarat, Victoria. Arch became manager of the 'computer centre' of Ballarat.

Iris, who was a Batchelor of Arts, went back to teaching, until they retired on 10 acres, a short distance out of Murchison, Victoria.

I left boarding school at 16 and couldn't get back home soon enough. I started nursing at the Cobar hospital in 1945 and loved it very much. I had a wonderful experience, which I would never have got at a teaching hospital.

I was on evening duty when peace was declared, so I was the only one who couldn't get out to celebrate. However, when the night staff took over, I decided I had to do something different.

Tommy Clapperton, who was a taxi driver (as well as the funeral director), was a great friend of all the nursing staff. Frequently on hot summer nights he would take us for a long singalong drive out past the mines on the Hillston Road and back. I think he had a wife, but regardless we all enjoyed the drives to cool off. In those days all cars had bench seats, so there would be at least 5 of us with Tom. Absolutely 'safety in numbers' in those days.

Tom was much older than any of us, just a very friendly kind man who enjoyed a joke and a yarn anytime.

My something different for V night When Tom came to take all the staff to their various celebrations, I had him bring me a bottle of Sherry on his next trip.

When I finished work and went down to the kitchen at 9pm., I poured an ordinary glass 3/4 full of straight sherry and drank half of it. Then I decided I had better go to the bedroom in case I fell over. I had never tasted it before and didn't really enjoy it, but the special event called for a 'trial run'. I was like the dog with the car, when I got it I didn't know what to do with it! So I finished it and went to bed.

I had never tasted beer until my 21st birthday party in the Nymagee hall. It caused 'shock/horror' to dear Mum and Father. I drank one glass just for the devil in me, but certainly didn't acquire the taste.

We used to go to all the dances in Nymagee from when we were very young. I used to be put to sleep on the back seat of the car, until a courting couple sat on me one night. After that we were placed on a rug with pillows and cover on a small corner of the stage behind where Mum sat. When we got too big for that a bed was made at the back of the piano.

The regular band was Pauline Pusell on the piano, her husband George on the drums and her brother Dudley Wright on the saxophone. At times, when Pauline was not available, Harry Palmer from Cobar used to play the piano. He said to Mum "If these kids are not musical when they grow up, it won't be for the want of drumming it in to them".

When Allan and I were having school at home, during the morning and lunch breaks we often played our game of 'stealing eggs'. This was with 5 rocks in a ring on each side, and in turn seeing who could get the most eggs, one at a time, without

being caught, until they were all on the one side.

We had three good neighbours, each 12 miles apart. We took it in turns of getting the weekly main, including the bread. Dick McLean, who had the grocery shop, always put a bag of boiled lollies in the order for us kids and we never looked for anything else in sweets. Unless we happened to get some small thing when we were in Cobar, mostly it would be icecream in a cone - (still my favourite) or in a dish with flavouring, when we had lunch at Mrs. Heaps shop or James's café.

Our neighbours were:

Tom Smith at 'Lowan'. This is where Allen went to school until I was old enough for both of us to get correspondence. Fred Wiggins: he taught me how to 'old time' dance from when I was 5, at the Nymagee hall. Wife Ethel and three boys - Jim, Jack and Ken.

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Nicholson and family - Jessy, Molly, Pat and Mick. Their Dad was wonderful. If we needed any help on occasions when Father was sick, he would ride the bike over the 12 miles to do whatever he could to help. Their place was 'Glenwood'.

My regular jobs were to keep the woodbox full, including the kindling to start the fire. I had to feed and water our pets which included poddy lambs, kangaroo joeys (3 at one stage), my joey was the oldest and hung around the home until I went away to school. Mostly 2 cats, average of 5 dogs, chooks, fan tail pigeons and occasionally 2 or 3 pigs to fatten up for killing on special occasions.

As soon as I could ride the bike properly I got the horses in if needed. At shearing and crutching times I helped in the shed when I could - sweeping the board or on the tar pot when needed. I used to muster on horseback for the sheep and cattle when they were required for one reason or another.

One of the most unusual things to happen when we were very young was this: We were in our old overland car, which had no hood, driving around the paddock after rain. We became badly bogged and ran the battery too flat for strong light to see the track home on the wet ground. Luckily we had the kerosene lantern in the car. Mum straddled the bonnet holding the lantern to help see the track home - slowly, carefully and successfully. I can still grin when I think of it, it would have made a good video from beginning to end.

Dick Collins and his wife Molly (nee Nicholson) were in the Post Office when we left Nymagee. Whenever he picked up the phone he would be singing. His favourite song was Boots and Saddle.

Ethel Werner sometimes ran kids concerts, which were very popular. We had very frequent dances and always a great Christmas tree party with good gifts. We drove all the kids out the Condobolin Road to meet Santa who was walking to town after his arrival by plane.

All our great soldiers from the district had a well attended public farewell before going overseas, and a very happy 'welcome home' on return.

I remember the great dances which were held for all celebrations in the Nymagee hall. Teddy Werner - 'the all time compare' - also took great pride in preparing the best dance floor surface. All the ladies took a cake and prepared trays of sandwiches to be passed around the seated crowd, as well at tea and coffee.

In came our great friends and 'dance keen' neighbours (originally from Weethalie, West Wyalong) the Macpherson family - Don and his good wife Olive, better known as Topsy.

Bill and Jack Macpherson opened a timber sawmill adjoining our boundary. Before that they had their sawmill a few miles from Boppy Mt., also one between Hermidale and Nyngan. They were very happy, hard working people, and enjoyed their time in Nymagee and district to the utmost. I am in touch with Topsy frequently, who has always been a fond genuine friend of myself and families. Topsy was a great help with my 21st birthday, she must have cooked for days, getting as much pleasure out of it as we all did.

Don did a lot of great handicrafts, especially making wool rugs. The main one I loved was a most beautiful hunting scene. It was 18 x 31 inches with two uniformed riders on horseback, a dog, 2 large trees, hills, clouds and sky background. They had it hanging over the inside of their front door, at the mill adjoining us. I admired it every time I was visiting. Much to my surprise and joy they gave it to me for my 21st. Today it still proudly hangs in my lounge room. My eldest granddaughter will be proud to have it in her home when I am no longer around.

One to the best memories of Topsy's visits to 'Marigold' was the Christmas dinner with bread sauce. This is a special tradition with our families on all special occasions, still carried on today. This was followed by a large Christmas pudding poured over with a big drink of brandy, lit to burn until there was no fire left.

Topsy and Don did lots of speciality cooking for all the flower shows in Cobar every year. They won many prizes at all times. Champion event of all was winning the cup three years running, for the greatest variety and largest quantity of speciality cooking.

Don was a wonderful support to Topsy in whatever she chose to take part in, at any time. Topsy gave the same support to him in whatever way possible at all times. Both were ready to give their best to anyone in need. Bill and Jack likewise, they were a very close group among themselves and the best of friends to us always.

Topsy was very good with sewing and knitting as well, entering many garments with success in the shows as well. She told me the greatest fun and friendship in their lives was in Nymagee and district.

They came to all the Cobar balls with us and we always had a wonderful time, after getting home at 4am. Those 69 miles flew by, with the good old singalong both ways.

Two friends she remembers very well from the balls were Bossy Mitchell and Ducky Waterson. The latter Topsy still keeps in touch with. One of her funniest 'Topsy Tales' was when a large boar pig, she hadn't seen dozing behind a bush, suddenly jumped out chasing her back to the truck, when they were out to rob a beehive. Topsy just got to the seat when the pig had his feet on the running board.

Thank you to all who enabled me to take part in your book, to share our happiest years of life in Nymagee.

Barry Betts

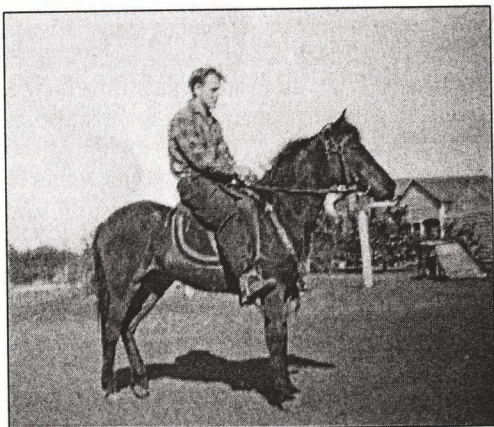
Was there much sport around Nymagee in the good old days? Well, now that you have asked ...

I left school early, at the age of 15, in 1952. It was always said I learnt more after I left school. I loved sport at school, whatever sport was on I would have a go at it. I even played hockey with the girls team on one occasion.

In the 1950's there was always plenty of sport around Nymagee: cricket, tennis, football, gun shoots, sports days, etc. Every weekend there was plenty to do. Mostly a ball on the Friday night, a dance Saturday night and sports on Sunday, I was often at all three.

I first remember playing cricket in Nymagee at the age of 15. Frank Carson would take us kids away on the back of his truck playing cricket at Hermidale and Canbelego. Nymagee had two or three teams going at one stage, a first grade side, a colts team and sometimes us kids. The first grade team was very strong, with some of the best cricketers from around the district. Some of the names were the Collins brothers, George Pusell, Dud Wright, Reg Hudson, Tommy Harland, Max Smith, Jack Mackey, the Rooney brothers, the list goes on.

Towards the mid-1950's tennis started to be a major sport all around the district, this being played on Saturday and Saturday nights. Cricket was also going strong, and was played on Sunday. By this time us teenagers were up playing in the first grade team, travelling to Kerrigundi, Cobar, Hermidale, Canbelego, etc.



Barry Betts



Nymagee Football Team
about 1956

By 1955-1956 football had started up at Nymagee. The big football competition between Cobar, Bourke, Nyngan and Brewarrina had folded temporarily. So a competition started between the smaller villages: Nymagee, Hermidale, Byrock, Coolabah, Canbelego and a team from Cobar known as the Cobar Blues.

This competition was known as the Lynch Cup. We played football for about three years, we played on all sorts of grounds, most were dirt and gravel.

Usually the ground was ploughed up before the games, there was no such thing as a grass surface. It was hard football as we were all mostly young fellows. Each team had a few older experienced players.

I can remember going to Cobar to play, the oval was where the Shire Council Depot is now. For two hours before the game we had to pick up slag (small rocks from the slag dump) and broken glass before we could start to play on the oval. I played against some very good players, they used to play hard and when they hit, they hit hard! I know why I have bad knees now. I mostly played on the wing.

Some of the players in this competition were Kevin Neale, Kevin Miskell, John Edwards, Pee Wee Holmes (from Cobar), Trapper Jefferies (Hermidale), George Meadows, Billy Kane, Keith and Kevin Lloyd (from Euabalong), just to name a few. This competition finished as players drifted away, also the bigger towns had started up their competition again.

In the 1960's tennis at Nymagee was very strong, most properties had a tennis court. Nymagee had a very strong team in town. The young people played at 'The Peak' (a property owned by Bill and Ethel Hodge). Teams from around the area would challenge each other, some of these teams were Pangee, Hermidale, Bobadah and Shuttleton. Some of the good players were: the Collins's, Smiths, Nicholsons, Cliff Wright, the three Rountree girls, Kellys, Fennamores, Mattchets and Gibsons.

Nymagee had six courts, 'The Peak' had three, Shuttleton three, Bobadah, Canbelego and Pangee also had good courts. I can remember getting my jobs done early so after lunch we could go to the neighbour's to play tennis, or they would come over to our place for the afternoon.

In the 1970's and 1980's there was a local competition with some very good players. Cobar had four teams, Kerrigundi, Hellmans Tank, The Peak, Nymagee and Canbelego all had one team. The teams consisted of eight ladies and eight men, each player played five sets for the day. This competition saw many great battles, where the final result depended on the last set. The crowd would be around cheering the players on, if it was 20 sets all, it would be a count of games, or you

might win 21-19. It was always a great day of tennis.

One of the best players in this competition as Dick Collins. Dick played with Nymagee, he was an extraordinary player. Dick could play all the kinds of tennis shots that were ever invented: rallies, drive, a cut serve. Dick could place a ball anywhere he wanted. He could slice a ball when serving that was impossible to return. I have seen him serve a ball with so much spin that the ball came back onto his side of the net.

On one particular occasion The Peak was playing Kerrigundi and I was umpiring. Dick and his wife, Molly, were playing Ethel and George Peacey. Dick was at his 'spinning best'. As he served he would roll his eyes around from side to side, the ball would fly either left or right - the opponent never knew which way. Mrs Peacey said to George, 'I have him worked out George, just watch his eyes, the way they roll will be the way the ball goes.' Dick's eyes rolled to the left, George had it covered and returned it. Next serve to Mrs Peacey, Dick's eyes rolled a few times, then he served with his eyes shut. The ball hit the base, kicked and went straight up in the air, so high it hit the back fence. Mrs Peacey had no hope of returning it, she turned to Dick and said, 'You dirty old man!'

There were also a lot of tennis tournaments. Players came from Nyngan, Tottenham, Condobolin, Parkes, Cobar, Hermidale, sometimes there were as many as 60-70 players.

In Cobar once, Bill Dillon and I played two young fellows - Mike Nicholson and John Collins. It was a 'handicap' tournament and we had to give Mike and John a 40 - love start. This meant we could not afford to make a mistake. The match lasted for some hours, it was late afternoon when we started and we finished late at night. Everyone had gone home but we still played on. Finally the 'youth' won and Bill and I collected the runners up prize. It was a pair of socks each - just what we needed as ours were worn out!

Nymagee Boys - Bill Rooney

Bob Ellicott was a small boy aged 10-11 at the time and completed his primary final that year, and obtained a bursary to higher education. He lived on his parent's farm south on the Nymagee Road, with the family, and sometimes rode a bike in to school, and sometimes had a lift - tough work. Not a great cricketer, but easily the best student, which was noticed by the teacher Ted Perry. At the end of 1937 we all went in different directions, and I have never seen him again. He became a prominent barrister and Queen's Counsel in Sydney, entered Commonwealth Parliament, and became Attorney General in the Fraser Government, and is still a prominent legal mind in Sydney. His Uncle was Sir Garfield Barwick, Former Chief Justice and Attorney General.

The second story concerns a Nymagee boy I went to school with, both at Nymagee and at Bathurst. His name was Ted Harland, son of Tom Harland Snr, a small boy full of great energy, but too frail to be a great sportsman, which he wanted to be, but tough as teak. I saw him run like the wind at the old bike track at Nymagee (aged around 10) not in a race, but playing, and an unseen wire strand caught him on the forehead and wiped him out, only for an hour and he was back running again.

At Bathurst he was too small, and always played out of his grades. Football he took on the giants, cricket he wanted to bowl faster than the rest, he never stopped running. He was destined with his parent's help to settle on the land at Nymagee, and do what the Harlands have been doing best for most of the 20th Century. Not to be - WW2 started in 1939, and as soon as he turned 18 he was gone. I have seen his name on the War Memorial at Canberra. He never made 21.

The third boy was older than I, and as a young man Bill Hudson Jnr was a slight man, always dressed better than any other young man in town. The most wonderful jockey and always rode many winners at the local races and gymkhanas. He lived too far from Randwick, so a great career was denied. Wiry and tough, he never took a backward step, and because of that had to defend himself from those who thought they could fight.

He played above his weight in the football teams, and had a great laugh and sense of fun. I remember with awe, watching him in a fine white silk shirt come down town and have a strong flask of hospital brandy, enter the dentist room in the front room of the hotel, check the price of extractions 5 shillings for the first tooth, and two and six for each of the others, and tell the dentist to take the lot, in excess of 20. He was not a pretty sight, the shirt was crimson. We laid him on a table in the old billiard room and used many towels and cloths to try and get him mobile enough to return to his home at the 1 mile on the Hermidale Road. Some months later, the dentist returned with a full set of dentures for him.

World War 2 started and Bill Hudson went away and spent some years in a Japanese Prisoner of War Camp, I am not sure where. Some years later his shell of a frame returned to Nymagee and he spent the rest of his short life trying to recover and still joking and laughing. I hope he received better than he was given - a small giant, a wasted life.

At the time the cricket scores were important, but there are hundreds of stories like these probably untold, of the fine people, swallowing dust, swatting flies, and doing what they do best, and no one knows. These three are remarkable people in their own way, each one different, but I would say Great Australians from a small community.

Nymagee School

The local children were asked what they think Nymagee is like now. They were also asked to tell what they do in Nymagee and what they like/dislike about Nymagee. These were their responses.

Thomas Cutting - age 5

I like the animals at Nymagee, especially the cows, goats, sheep and cats.

There is a big dip in the road when you drive into Nymagee. They made it so all of the water can float down it.

I like mustering the sheep with my Dad. We walk to muster them, we don't use a motorbike or a horse very often.

We live on a property called 'Hill Plain'. We grow wheat and oats. I like harvesting time the best.

Wade Hardwick - age 7

You can ride in the buggy that my Dad built. It can go as fast as a car. It can easily run down a pig and a goat.

Best of all I like playing with my sheepdog Mindy. She comes back with the ball and drops it when you say "drop".

When you come in to Nymagee, you can see my place easily, because there aren't many houses.

Rebble Taylor - age 7

At the school there is a swimming pool. It is still being fixed. It is not ready to swim in yet.

I live here with my two brothers and my Mum and Dad. When I was three I lived in the house we are in now, but we moved to Condobolin for two years and now we are back in Nymagee.

I play with my dog on the weekends.

Arther Taylor - age 9

I live in Nymagee with my family.

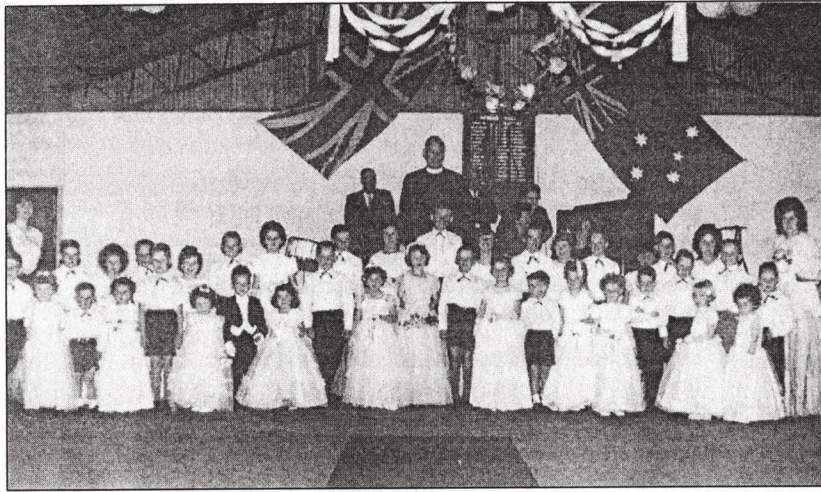
I like to ride my Malvern Star bike anywhere I like because there aren't many cars in Nymagee but I still have to be careful of trucks and semi-trailers.

The problem with Nymagee is there are no shops. You have to go to Cobar or Condobolin.

In the olden days, my Dad's Dad ran the pub. Today, the only place you can buy things from is the pub. You can buy chips, hot pies, hot chips and drinks.



Nymagee Public School



The miniature debutantes at the Church of England Ball, Nymagee, 1965

Second from left Tony Place, then David Place (from Tottenham). Then Kerry Fennamore (3rd boy from right), Michelle Fennamore in the back row near piano and her partner Chris Elder.

Photo of debutante being presented is Michelle Fennamore with Chris Elder.



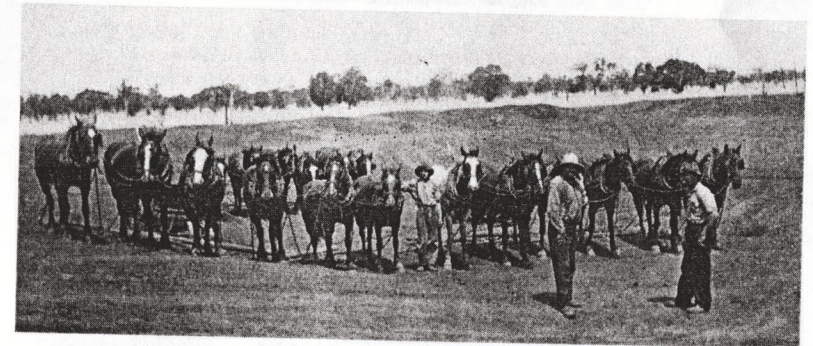
Photos contributed by
Gwen Fennamore.

Charlie Sweeting

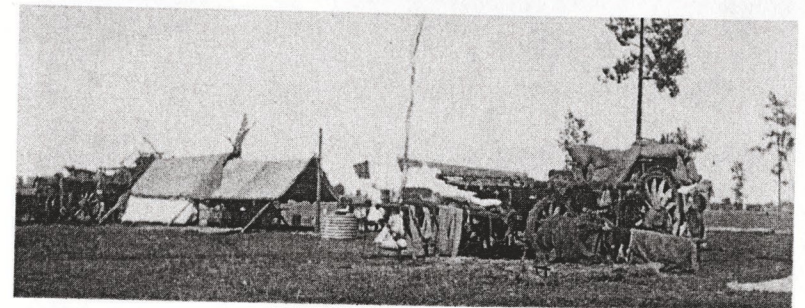
These are photos of Charlie Sweeting and family doing work with their horse team.



Tom Cromack - Wirchillaba Dip
Sinking sheep dip with Charlie
Sweeting's gear



Pop & Billy Gannon & George 1934



Karwarn - Cobar
Pop Sweetings wagon & camp at the back
Bill Gannon's in front. Note rabbits hanging in screen off Gannon's wagon



Voting taking place at the Nymagee Post Office 1990 elections.
Pictured are Pat Von Schill and Lu Levy with visiting absentee voters



Thomas & Margaret Harland

We hope you have enjoyed your trip down 'memory lane'. It has been a wonderful experience putting this book together, and it has put many people in touch with one another again.

'Thankyou' to everyone who has contributed; whether it be a story, some photos or some little memory. Without your help this book would not have been possible.

Nymagee will always be a special place to a lot of people, and we hope that by publishing these stories, we can keep your memories alive.

May future generations cherish these memories, be inspired by the sense of community spirit shown by our pioneers and continue to value the country way of life.



Nymagee, located 100kms from Cobar in Western New South Wales, was a thriving mining town in the early 1900's.

The history of Nymagee, and an insight into the life and times of outback Australia, is revealed in this collection of short stories and recollections from the people who have lived there.

